THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

THE

FALL OF JERUSALEM.

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OF JERUSALEM

A DRAMATIC POEM

BY THE REV. H. H. MILMAN

NEW EDITION

777

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THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

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INTRODUCTION.

Every reader will at once perceive from the nature of the interest, and from the language, that this drama was neither written with a view to public representation, nor can be adapted to it without being entirely remodelled and re-written. The critic will draw the same conclusion from certain peculiarities in the composition, irreconcileable with the arrangements of the theatre; the introducing and dismissing of the subordinate characters after a single appearance; and yet appropriating to them some of the most poetical speeches.

The groundwork of the poem is to be found in Josephus, but the events of a considerable time are compressed into a period of about

thirty-six hours. Though their children are fictitious characters, the leaders of the Jews, Simon, John, and Eleazar, are historical. At the beginning of the siege the defenders of the city were divided into three factions. John, however, having surprised Elea ar, who occupied the Temple, during a festival, the party of Eleazar became subordinate to that of John. The character of John the Galilean was that of excessive sensuality, I have therefore considered him as belonging to the sect of the Sadducees; Simon, on the other hand, I have represented as a native of Jerusalem, and a strict Pharisee; although his soldiers were chiefly Edomites. The Christians, we learn from Eusebius, abandoned the city previous to the siege (by divine command, according to that author), and took refuge in Pella, a small town on the further side of the Jordan. The constant tradition of the Church has been, that no one professing that faith perished during all the havoc which attended on this most awful visitation.

It has been my object also to show the full completion of prophecy in this great event; nor do I conceive that the public mind (should this poem merit attention) can be directed to so striking and so incontestable an evidence of the Christian faith without advantage. Those whom duty might not induce to compare the long narrative of Josephus with the Scriptural prediction of the "Abomination of Desolation," may be tempted by the embellishments of poetic language, and the interest of a dramatic fable.

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THE

FALL OF JERUSALEM.

CHARACTERS.

ROMANS.

Titus.
Caius Placidus.
Tiberius Alexander.
Terentius Rufus.
Diagoras, a Stoic philosopher.
Joseph (the Historian) with the Roman army.
Soldiers, &c.

JEWS IN THE CITY.

Simon, the Assassin.
John, the Tyrant.
Eleazar, the Zealot.
Amariah, son of John.
The High-Priest.
Ben Cathla, leader of the Edomites.
Aaron, a Levite.
Abiram, a false Prophet.
Many Jews.

Javan, a Christian, by birth a Jew.

Miriam, } *Daughters of Simon.*
Salone, }

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THE FALL OF JERUSALEM.

The Mount of Olives—Evening.

Titus, Caius Placidus, Tiberius Alexander, Terentius Rufus, Diagoras, &c.

TITUS.

Advance the eagles, Caius Placidus, (1)
Even to the walls of this rebellious city!
What! shall our bird of conquest, that hath flown
Over the world, and built her nest of glory
Even in the palace tops of proudest kings,
What! shall she check and pause here in her circle,
Her centre of dominion? By the gods,
It is a treason to all-conquering Rome,
That thus our baffled legions stand at bay
Before this hemm'd and famishing Jerusalem.

PLACIDUS.

Son of Vespasian! I have been a soldier,
Till the helm hath worn mine aged temples bare.
Battles have been familiar to mine eyes
As is the sunlight, and the angry Mars
Wears not a terror to appal the souls
Of constant men, but I have fronted it.
I have seen the painted Briton sweep to battle
On his scythed car, and when he fell, he fell
As one that honour'd death by nobly dying.
And I have been where flying Parthians shower'd
Their arrows, making the pursuer check
His fierce steed with the sudden grasp of death.
But war like this, so frantic and so desperate,
Man ne'er beheld. Our swords are blunt with slaying,
And yet, as though the earth cast up again
Souls discontented with a single death,
They grow beneath the slaughter. Neither battle,
Nor famine, nor the withering pestilence,
Subdues these prodigals of blood: by day

They cast their lives upon our swords; by night
They turn their civil weapons on themselves,
Even till insatiate War shrinks to behold
The hideous consummation.

TITUS.

It must be—
And yet it moves me, Romans! it confounds
The counsels of my firm philosophy,
That Ruin's merciless ploughshare must pass o'er,
And barren salt be sown on yon proud city.
As on our olive-crowned hill we stand,
Where Kedron at our feet its scanty waters
Distils from stone to stone with gentle motion,
As through a valley sacred to sweet peace,
How boldly doth it front us! how majestically!
Like a luxurious vineyard, the hill side
Is hung with marble fabrics, line o'er line,
Terrace o'er terrace, nearer still, and nearer
To the blue heavens. Here bright and sumptuous palaces,
With cool and verdant gardens interspers'd;

Here towers of war that frown in massy strength.
While over all hangs the rich purple eve,
As conscious of its being her last farewell
Of light and glory to that fated city.
And, as our clouds of battle dust and smoke
Are melted into air, behold the Temple,
In undisturb'd and lone serenity
Finding itself a solemn sanctuary
In the profound of heaven! It stands before us
A mount of snow fretted with golden pinnacles! (2)
The very sun, as though he worshipp'd there,
Lingers upon the gilded cedar roofs;
And down the long and branching porticoes,
On every flowery-sculptured capital,
Glitters the homage of his parting beams.
By Hercules! the sight might almost win
The offended majesty of Rome to mercy.

TIBERIUS ALEXANDER.

Wond'rous indeed it is, great Son of Cæsar,
But it shall be more wond'rous, when the triumph

Of Titus marches through those brazen gates,
Which seem as though they would invite the world
To worship in the precincts of her Temple,
As he in laurell'd pomp is borne along
To that new palace of his pride.

TITUS.

Tiberius!
It cannot be——

TIBERIUS.

What cannot be, which Rome
Commands, and Titus, the great heir of Rome?

TITUS.

I tell thee, Alexander, it must fall!
Yon lofty city, and yon gorgeous Temple,
Are consecrate to Ruin. Earth is weary
Of the wild factions of this jealous people,
And they must feel our wrath, the wrath of Rome,
Even so that the rapt stranger shall admire
Where that proud city stood, which was Jerusalem.

DIAGORAS.

Thy brethren of the Porch, imperial Titus, (3)
Of late esteem'd thee at the height of those
That with consummate wisdom have tamed down
The fierce and turbulent passions which distract
The vulgar soul; they deem'd that, like Olympus,
Thou, on thy cold and lofty eminence,
Severely didst maintain thy sacred quiet
Above the clouds and tumult of low earth.
But now we see thee stooping to the thraldom
Of every fierce affection, now entranced
In deepest admiration, and anon
Wrath hath the absolute empire o'er thy soul.
Methinks we must unschool our royal pupil,
And cast him back to the common herd of men.

TITUS.

'Tis true, Diagoras; yet wherefore ask not,
For vainly have I question'd mine own reason:
But thus it is—I know not whence or how,
There is a stern command upon my soul.

I feel the inexorable fate within
That tells me, carnage is a duty here,
And that the appointed desolation chides
The tardy vengeance of our war. Diagoras,
If that I err, impeach my tenets. Destiny
Is over all, and hard Necessity
Holds o'er the shifting course of human things
Her paramount dominion. Like a flood
The irresistible stream of fate flows on,
And urges in its vast and sweeping motion
Kings, Consuls, Cæsars, with their mightiest armies,
Each to his fix'd, inevitable end.
Yea, even eternal Rome, and Father Jove,
Sternly submissive, sail that onward tide.
And now am I upon its rushing bosom,
I feel its silent billows swell beneath me,
Bearing me and the conquering arms of Rome
'Gainst yon devoted city. On they pass,
And ages yet to come shall pause and wonder
At the utter wreck, which they shall leave behind them.

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SA...

But, Placidus, I read thy look severe.
This is no time nor place for school debates
On the high points of wisdom. Let this night
Our wide encircling walls complete their circuit; (4)
And still the approaching trenches closer mine
Their secret way: the engines and the towers
Stand each at their appointed post—Terentius,
That charge be thine.

TERENTIUS.

There spoke again the Roman
Faith! like old Mummius, I should give to the flame
Whate'er opposed the sovereign sway of Cæsar, (5)
If it were wrought of massy molten gold:
And though I wear a beard, I boast not much
Of my philosophy. But this I know,
That to oppose the omnipotent arms of Rome
Is to pluck down and tempt a final doom.

The Fountain of Siloe—Night.

JAVAN.

Sweet fountain, once again I visit thee! (6)
And thou art flowing on, and freshening still
The green moss, and the flowers that bend to thee,
Modestly with a soft unboastful murmur
Rejoicing at the blessings that thou bearest.
Pure, stainless, thou art flowing on; the stars
Make thee their mirror, and the moonlight beams
Course one another o'er thy silver bosom:
And yet thy flowing is through fields of blood,
And armed men their hot and weary brows
Slake with thy limpid and perennial coolness.
Even with such rare and singular purity
Mov'st thou, oh Miriam, in yon cruel city.
Men's eyes, o'erwearied with the sights of war,
With tumult and with grief, repose on thee
As on a refuge and a sweet refreshment.

Thou canst o'erawe, thou in thy gentleness,
A trembling, pale, and melancholy maid,
The brutal violence of ungodly men.
Thou glidest on amid the dark pollution
In modesty unstain'd, and heavenly influences,
More lovely than the light of star or moon,
As though delighted with their own reflection
From spirit so pure, dwell evermore upon thee.
Oh! how dost thou, beloved proselyte
To the high creed of him who died for men,
Oh! how dost thou commend the truths I teach thee,
By the strong faith and soft humility
Wherewith thy soul embraces them! Thou prayest,
And I, who pray with thee, feel my words wing'd,
And holier fervor gushing from my heart,
While heaven seems smiling kind acceptance down
On the associate of so pure a worshipper.
But ah! why com'st thou not? these two long nights
I've watch'd for thee in vain, and have not felt
The music of thy footsteps on my spirit——

VOICE AT A DISTANCE.

Javan!

JAVAN.

It is her voice! the air is fond of it,
And enviously delays its tender sounds
From the ear that thirsteth for them——Miriam!

Javan, Miriam.

JAVAN.

Nay, stand thus in thy timid breathlessness,
That I may gaze on thee, and thou not chide me
Because I gaze too fondly.

MIRIAM.

Hast thou brought me
Thy wonted offerings?

JAVAN.

Dearest, they are here:
The bursting fig, the cool and ripe pomegranate,
The skin all rosy with the emprisoned wine;

All I can bear thee, more than thou canst bear
Home to the city.

MIRIAM.

Bless thee!—Oh my father!
How will thy famish'd and thy toil-bow'd frame
Resume its native majesty! thy words,
When this bright draught hath slak'd thy parched lips,
Flow with their wonted freedom and command.

JAVAN.

Thy father! still no thought but of thy father!
Nay, Miriam! but thou must hear me now,
Now ere we part—if we must part again,
If my sad spirit must be rent from thine.
Even now our city trembles on the verge
Of utter ruin. Yet a night or two,
And the fierce stranger in our burning streets
Stands conqueror: and how the Roman conquers,
Let Gischala, let fallen Jotapata (7)
Tell, if one living man, one innocent child,
Yet wander o'er their cold and scatter'd ashes.

They slew them, Miriam, the old gray man,
Whose blood scarce tinged their swords—(nay, turn not
from me,
The tears thou sheddest feel as though I wrung them
From mine own heart, my life-blood's dearest drops)—
They slew them, Miriam, at the mother's breast,
The smiling infants;—and the tender maid,
The soft, the loving, and the chaste, like thee,
They slew her not till——

MIRIAM.

Javan, 'tis unkind!
I have enough at home of thoughts like these,
Thoughts horrible, that freeze the blood, and make
A heavier burthen of this weary life.
I hoped with thee t' have pass'd a tranquil hour,
A brief, a hurried, yet still tranquil hour!
—But thou art like them all! the miserable
Have only Heaven, where they can rest in peace,
Without being mock'd and taunted with their misery.

JAVAN.

Thou know'st it is a lover's wayward joy
To be reproach'd by her he loves, or thus
Thou would'st not speak. But 'twas not to provoke
That sweet reproof, which sounds so like to tenderness:
I would alarm thee, shock thee, but to save.
That old and secret stair, down which thou stealest
At midnight through tall grass and olive trunks,
Which cumber, yet conceal thy difficult path,
It cannot long remain secure and open;
Nearer and closer the stern Roman winds
His trenches; and on every side but this
Soars his emprisoning wall. Yet, yet 'tis time,
And I must bear thee with me, where are met
In Pella the neglected church of Christ.

MIRIAM.

With thee! to fly with thee! thou mak'st me fear
Lest all this while I have deceived my soul,
Excusing to myself our stolen meetings

By the fond thought, that for my father's life
I labour'd, bearing sustenance from thee,
Which he hath deem'd heaven-sent.

JAVAN.

Oh! farewell then
The faithless dream, the sweet yet faithless dream,
That Miriam loves me!

MIRIAM.

Love thee! I am here,
Here at dead midnight by the fountain's side,
Trusting thee, Javan, with a faith as fearless
As that with which the instinctive infant twines
To its mother's bosom—Love thee! when the sounds
Of massacre are round me, when the shouts
Of frantic men in battle rack the soul
With their importunate and jarring din,
Javan, I think on thee, and am at peace.
Our famish'd maidens gaze on me, and see
That I am famish'd like themselves, as pale,
With lips as parch'd and eyes as wild, yet I

Sit patient with an enviable smile
On my wan cheeks, for then my spirit feasts
Contented on its pleasing thoughts of thee.
My very prayers are full of thee, I look
To heaven and bless thee; for from thee I learnt
The way by which we reach the eternal mansions.
But thou, injurious Javan! coldly doubtest!
And—Oh! but I have said too much! Oh! scorn not
The immodest maid, whom thou hast vex'd to utter
What yet she scarce dared whisper to herself.

JAVAN.

Will it then cease? will it not always sound
Sweet, musical as thus? and wilt thou leave me?

MIRIAM.

My father!

JAVAN.

Miriam! is not thy father
(Oh, that such flowers should bloom on such a stock!)
The curse of Israel? even his common name
Simon the Assassin! of the bloody men

That hold their iron sway within yon city,
The bloodiest!

MIRIAM.

Oh cease! I pray thee cease!
Javan! I know that all men hate my father;
Javan! I fear that all should hate my father;
And therefore, Javan, must his daughter's love,
Her dutiful, her deep, her fervent love,
Make up to his forlorn and desolate heart
The forfeited affections of his kind.
Is't not so written in our Law? and He
We worship came not to destroy the Law.
Then let men rain their curses, let the storm
Of human hate beat on his rugged trunk,
I will cling to him, starve, die, bear the scoffs
Of men upon my scatter'd bones with him.

JAVAN.

Oh, Miriam! what a fatal art hast thou
Of winding thought, word, act, to thy sole purpose;
The enamouring one even now too much enamour'd!

I must admire thee more for so denying,
Than I had dared if thou hadst fondly granted.
Thou dost devote thyself to utterest peril,
And me to deepest anguish; yet even now
Thou art lovelier to me in thy cold severity,
Flying me, leaving me without a joy,
Without a hope on earth, without thyself;
Thou art lovelier now than if thy yielding soul
Had smiled on me a passionate consent.
Go! for I see thy parting homeward look,
Go in thy beauty! like a setting star,
The last in all the thick and moonless heavens,
O'er the lone traveller in the trackless desert.
Go! if this dark and miserable earth
Do jealously refuse us place for meeting,
There is a heaven for those who trust in Christ.
Farewell!———

And thou return'st!—

MIRIAM.

I had forgot——

The fruit, the wine——Oh! when I part from thee
How can I think of ought but thy last words?

JAVAN.

Bless thee! but we may meet again even here!
Thou look'st consent, I see it through thy tears.
Yet once again that cold sad word, Farewell!

The House of Simon.

MIRIAM.

Oh God! thou surely dost approve mine act,
For thou didst bid thy soft and silver moon
To light me back upon my intricate way.
Even o'er each shadowy thing at which I trembled
She pour'd a sober beauty, and my terror
Was mingled with a sense of calm delight.
How changed that way! when yet a laughing child,
It was my sport to thread that broken stair

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S

That from our house leads down into the vale,
By which, in ancient days, the maidens stole
To bathe in the cool fountain's secret waters.
In each wild olive trunk, and twisted root
Of sycamore, with ivy overgrown,
I have nestled, and the flowers would seem to welcome me.
I loved it with a child's capricious love,
Because none knew it but myself. Its loneliness
I loved, for still my sole companions there,
The doves, sate murmuring in the noonday sun.
Ah! now there broods no bird of peace and love!
Even as I pass'd, a sullen vulture rose,
And heavily it flapp'd its huge wings o'er me,
As though o'ergorged with blood of Israel.

Miriam, Salone.

MIRIAM.

Sister, not yet at rest?

SALONE.

At rest! at rest!

The wretched and the desperate, let them court
The dull, the dreamless, the unconscious sleep,
To lap them in its stagnant lethargy.
But oh! the bright, the rapturous disturbances
That break my haunted slumbers! Fast they come,
They crowd around my couch, and all my chamber
Is radiant with them. There I lie and bask
In their glad promise, till the oppressed spirit
Can bear no more, and I come forth to breathe
The cool free air.

MIRIAM.

Dear sister, in our state
So dark, so hopeless, dreaming still of glory!

SALONE.

Low-minded Miriam! I tell thee, oft
I have told thee, nightly do the visitations
Break on my gifted sight, more golden bright
Than the rich morn on Carmel. Of their shape,
Sister, I know not; this I only know,
That they pour o'er me like the restless waters

Of some pure cataract in the noontide sun.
There is a mingling of all glorious forms,
Of Angels riding upon cloudy thrones,
And our proud city marching all abroad
Like a crown'd conqueror o'er the trampled Gentiles.

MIRIAM.

Alas! when God afflicts us in his wrath,
'Tis sin to mock with wild untimely gladness
His stern inflictions! Else, beloved Salone,
My soul would envy thee thy mad forgetfulness,
And dote on the distraction of thy dreams
Till it imbibed the infection of their joy.

SALONE.

What mean'st thou?

MIRIAM.

Ah! thou know'st too well, Salone,
How with an audible and imperious voice
The Lord is speaking in the streets of Judah,
" Down to the dust, proud daughters of Jerusalem!
" The crownings of your head be bitter ashes,

" Your festal garments changed to mourning sackcloth,
" Your bridal songs fail into burial wailings."

SALONE.

Our bridal songs! (8) Away! I know them now,
They were the rich and bursting cadences
That thrall'd mine ears. I tell thee, doubting woman!
My spirit drank the sounds of all the city.
And there were shriekings for the dead, and sobs
Of dying men, and the quick peevish moan
Of the half famish'd: there were trumpet sounds
Of arming to the battle, and the shouts
Of onset, and the fall of flaming houses
Crashing around. But in the house of Simon,
The silver lute spake to the dulcimer;
The tabret and the harp held sweet discourse;
And all along our roofs, and all about
The silence of our chambers flow'd the sweetness.
Even yet I hear them—Hark! yet, yet they sound.

MIRIAM.

Alas! we listen to our own fond hopes,

Even till they seem no more our fancy's children.
We put them on a prophet's robes, endow them
With prophets' voices, and then Heaven speaks in them,
And that which we would have be, surely shall be.

SALONE.

What, mock'st thou still? still enviously doubtest
The mark'd and favour'd of the Everlasting?

MIRIAM.

Oh gracious Lord! thou know'st she hath not eaten
For two long days, and now her troubled brain
Is full of strangeness.

SALONE.

Ha! still unbelieving!
Then, then 'tis true, what I have doubted long.
False traitress to our city, to the race,
The chosen race of Abraham! loose apostate
From Israel's faith! Believer in the Crucified!
I know thee, I abjure thee. Thou'rt no child
Of Simon's house, no sister of Salone:
I blot thee from my heart, I wipe away

All memory of our youthful pleasant hours,
Our blended sports and tasks, and joys and sorrows;
Yea, I'll proclaim thee.

MIRIAM.

Sister! dearest sister!
Thou seest that I cannot speak for tears.

SALONE.

Away! thou wilt not speak, thou dar'st not—Hark!
My father's armed footstep! at whose tread
Sion rejoices, and the pavement stones
Of Salem shout with proud and boastful echos.
The Gentiles' scourge, the Christians'—tremble, false one!

Miriam, Salone, Simon.

SALONE.

Father!

MIRIAM.

Dear father!

SALONE.

Daughters, I have been

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SAR...

With Eleazar, and with John of Galilee,
The son of Sadoc. We have search'd the city,
If any rebel to our ordinance
Do traitorously withhold his private hoard
Of stolen provision from the public store.

SALONE.

And found ye any guilty of a fraud
So base on Judah's warriors?

SIMON.

Yes, my children!
There sate a woman in a lowly house,
And she had moulded meal into a cake;
And she sate weeping even in wild delight
Over her sleeping infants, at the thought
Of how their eyes would glisten to behold
The unaccustom'd food. She had not tasted
Herself the strange repast: but she had raised
The covering under which the children lay
Crouching and clinging fondly to each other,
As though the warmth that breath'd from out their bodies

Had some refreshment for their wither'd lips.
We bared our swords to slay: but subtle John
Snatch'd the food from her, trod it on the ground,
And mock'd her.

MIRIAM.

But *thou* didst not smite her, father?

SIMON.

No! we were wiser than to bless with death
A wretch like her.
But I must seek within,
If he that oft at dead of midnight placeth
The wine and fruit within our chosen house,
Hath minister'd this night to Israel's chief.

MIRIAM, SALONE.

SALONE.

Oh, Miriam! I dare not tell him now!
For even as those two infants lay together
Nestling their sleeping faces on each other,
Even so have we two lain, and I have felt

Thy breath upon my face, and every motion
Of thy soft bosom answering to mine own.

Simon, Salone, Miriam.

SIMON.

Come, daughters, I have wash'd my bloody hands,
And said my prayers, and we will eat—And thee
First will I bless, thou secret messenger,
That mine ambrosial banquet dost prepare
With gracious stealth: where'er thou art, if yet
Thy unseen presence lingers in our air,
Or walks our earth in beauty, hear me bless thee.

MIRIAM *(apart)*.

He blesseth me! me, though he means it not!
I thought t' have heard his stern heart-withering curse,
And God hath changed it to a gentle blessing.

SIMON.

Why stands my loving Miriam aloof?
Will she not join to thank the God of Israel,

Who thus with signal mercy seals her father
His chosen captain.

MIRIAM *(apart.)*

Yet must I endure—
For if he knew it came from Christian hands,
While the ripe fruit was bursting at his lips,
While the cool wine-cup slak'd his burning throat,
He'd dash it to the earth, and trample on it;
And then he'd perish, perish in his sins——
Father, I come—but I have vow'd to sing
A hymn this night,—I'll follow thee anon.

SIMON.

Come, then, Salone; while we feast, I'll tell thee
More deeds of justice which mine arm hath wrought
Against the foes of Salem, and the renegades
That have revolted from the arms of Israel.
And thou shalt wave thy raven locks with pride
To hear the stern-told glories of thy father.

MIRIAM, *alone.*

Oh Thou! thou who canst melt the heart of stone,

And make the desert of the cruel breast
A paradise of soft and gentle thoughts!
Ah! will it ever be, that thou wilt visit
The darkness of my father's soul? Thou knowest
In what strong bondage Zeal and ancient Faith,
Passion and stubborn Custom, and fierce Pride,
Hold th' heart of man. Thou knowest, Merciful!
That knowest all things, and dost ever turn
Thine eye of pity on our guilty nature.

For thou wert born of woman! thou didst come,
Oh Holiest! to this world of sin and gloom,
Not in thy dread omnipotent array;
And not by thunders strew'd
Was thy tempestuous road;
Nor indignation burnt before thee on thy way.
But theé, a soft and naked child,
Thy mother undefiled,
In the rude manger laid to rest
From off her virgin breast.

The heavens were not commanded to prepare
A gorgeous canopy of golden air;
Nor stoop'd their lamps th' enthroned fires on high:
A single silent star
Came wandering from afar,
Gliding uncheck'd and calm along the liquid sky;
The Eastern Sages leading on
As at a kingly throne,
To lay their gold and odours sweet
Before thy infant feet.

The Earth and Ocean were not hush'd to hear
Bright harmony from every starry sphere;
Nor at thy presence brake the voice of song
From all the cherub choirs,
And seraphs' burning lyres
Pour'd thro' the host of heaven the charmed clouds along.
One angel troop the strain began,
Of all the race of man
By simple shepherds heard alone,
That soft Hosanna's tone.

And when thou didst depart, no car of flame
To bear thee hence in lambent radiance came;
Nor visible Angels mourn'd with drooping plumes:
Nor didst thou mount on high
From fatal Calvary
With all thine own redeem'd outbursting from their tombs.
For thou didst bear away from earth
But one of human birth,
The dying felon by thy side, to be
In Paradise with thee.

Nor o'er thy cross the clouds of vengeance brake;
A little while the conscious earth did shake
At that foul deed by her fierce children done;
A few dim hours of day
The world in darkness lay;
Then bask'd in bright repose beneath the cloudless sun:
While thou didst sleep beneath the tomb,
Consenting to thy doom;
Ere yet the white-robed Angel shone
Upon the sealed stone.

And when thou didst arise, thou didst not stand
With Devastation in thy red right hand,
Plaguing the guilty city's murtherous crew;
But thou didst haste to meet
Thy mother's coming feet,
And bear the words of peace unto the faithful few.
Then calmly, slowly didst thou rise
Into thy native skies,
Thy human form dissolved on high
In its own radiancy.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

The House of Simon—Break of Day.

SIMON.

The air is still and cool. It comes not yet:
I thought that I had felt it in my sleep
Weighing upon my choked and labouring breast,
That did rejoice beneath the stern oppression;
I thought I saw its lurid gloom o'erspreading
The starless waning night. But yet it comes not,
The broad and sultry thundercloud, wherein
The God of Israel evermore pavilions
The chariot of his vengeance. I look out,
And still, as I have seen, morn after morn,
The hills of Judah flash upon my sight
The accursed radiance of the Gentile arms.
But oh! ye sky-descending ministers,
That on invisible and soundless wing
Stoop to your earthly purposes, as swift
As rushing fire, and terrible as the wind

That sweeps the tentless desert—Ye that move
Shrouded in secrecy as in a robe,
And gloom of deepest midnight the vaunt-courier
Of your dread presence! Will ye not reveal?
Will ye not one compassionate glimpse vouchsafe,
By what dark instruments 'tis now your charge
To save the Holy City?——Lord of Israel!
Thee too I ask, with bold yet holy awe,
Which now of thy obsequious elements
Choosest thou for thy champion and thy combatant?
For well they know, the wide and deluging Waters,
The ravenous Fire, and the plague-breathing Air,
Yea, and the yawning and wide-chasmed Earth,
They know thy bidding, by fix'd habit bound
To the usage of obedience. Or the rather,
Look we in weary yet undaunted hope
For Him that is to come, the Mighty Arm,
The Wearer of the purple robe of vengeance,
The Crowned with dominion? Let him haste;
The wine-press waits the trampling of his wrath,

And Judah yearns t' unfurl the Lion banner
Before the terrible radiance of his coming.

SIMON, JOHN, ELEAZAR, the HIGH-PRIEST, AMARIAH, &c. &c.

JOHN.

How, Simon! have we broken on thy privacy!
Thou wert discoursing with the spirits of air.
Now, Eleazar, were not holy Simon
The just, the merciful, the righteous Simon,
A vessel meet for the prophetic trance?
Methinks 'tis on him now!

SIMON.

Ha! John of Galilee,
Still in the taunting vein? Reserv'st thou not
The bitter overflowings of thy lips
For yon fierce Gentiles?—But I will endure.

JOHN.

And then perchance 'twill please the saintly Simon,
When he hath mumbled o'er his two-hour prayers,

That we do ope our gates, and sally forth
To combat the uncircumcised——

SIMON.

Thy scoffs
Fall on me as the thin and scattering rain
Upon our Temple. If thou art here to urge
That, with confederate valiant resolution,
We burst upon the enemies of Jerusalem;
The thunder followeth not the lightning's flash
More swiftly than my warlike execution
Shall follow the fierce trumpet of thy wrath!

JOHN.

But hast thou ponder'd well, if still there be not
Some holy fast, new moon, or rigid sabbath,
Which may excuse a tame and coward peace
For one day longer to your men of Edom?

HIGH-PRIEST.

Oh! 'tis unwise, ye sworded delegates
Of Him who watcheth o'er Jerusalem,
Thus day by day in angry quarrel meeting

To glare upon each other, and to waste
In civil strife the blood that might preserve us.
The Roman conquers, but by Jewish arms.
The torrent, that in one broad channel rolling
Bears down the labour'd obstacles of man,
The o'erstriding bridge, the fix'd and ponderous dam,
Being sever'd, in its lazy separate course
Suffers control, and stagnates to its end.
And so ye fall, because ye do disdain
To stand together—like the pines of Lebanon,
That when in one vast wood they crown the hill,
From their proud heads shake off the uninjuring tempest;
But when their single trunks stand bare and naked
Before the rushing whirlwind, one by one
It hurls the uprooted trunks into the vale.

ELEAZAR *(apart.)*

Curse on his words of peace! fall John, fall Simon,
There falls an enemy of Eleazar.

SIMON.

Now, John of Galilee, the High-Priest speaks wisely.

JOHN.

Why, ay, it is the privilege of their office,
The solemn grave distinction of their ephod.
Even such discourse as this, so calm, so sage,
Did old Mathias hold; (9) and therefore Simon,
Unwilling that the vantage of his wisdom
Should rob our valour of its boasted fame,
Did slay him with his sons upon our wall!

SIMON.

Peace, son of Belial! or I'll scourge thee back
To the harlot chambers of thy loose adulteries.
I slew my foe, and where's the armed man
That will behold his enemy at his feet,
And spare to set his foot upon his neck?
The sword was given, and shall the sword not slay?—

HIGH-PRIEST.

Break off! break off! I hear the Gentile horn
Winding along the wide entrenched line.
Hear ye it not? hill answers hill, the valleys
In their deep channels lengthen out the sound,
It rushes down Jehoshaphat, the depths

Of Hinnom answer. Hark! again they blow,
Chiding you, men of Judah, and insulting
Your bare and vacant walls, that now oppose not
Their firm array of javelin-hurling men,
Slingers, and pourers of the liquid fire.

AMARIAH.

Blow! blow! and rend the heavens, thou deep-voiced horn!
I hear thee, and rejoice at thee. Thou summoner
To the storm of battle, thou that dost invite
With stern and welcome importunity
The warrior soul to that high festival,
Where Valour with his armed hand administers
The cup of death!

JOHN.

Again, again it sounds;
It doth demand a parley with our chiefs.

AMARIAH.

Ay, father! and let Israel's chiefs reply
In the brave language of their javelin showers,
And shouts of furious onset.

JOHN.

Hold, hot boy!
That know'st not the deep luxury of scorn.
We'll meet them, Simon, but to scoff at them;
We'll dally with their hopes of base surrender,
Then mock them, till their haughty captain writhe
Beneath the keen and biting contumely,
Now, Eleazar, lead the way; brave Simon,
I follow thee—Come, men of Israel, come.

The Walls of the City.

*Below—*TITUS*, the Roman Army*, JOSEPH *of Jotapata, &c.*
*Above—*SIMON, JOHN, ELEAZAR, AMARIAH, *Jews.*

TITUS.

Men of Jerusalem! whose hardy zeal
And valiant patience in a cause less desperate
Might force the foe to reverence and admire;
To you thus speaks again the Queen of Earth,

All-conquering Rome!—whose kingdom is, where'er
The sunshine beams on living men; beneath
The shadow of whose throne the world reposes,
And glories in being subjected to her,
Even as 'tis subject to the immortal gods—
To you, whose mad and mutinous revolt
Hath harrow'd all your rich and pleasant land
With fiery rapine; sunk your lofty cities
To desolate heaps of monumental ashes;
Yet with that patience, which becomes the mighty,
The endurance of the lion, that disdains
The foe whose conquest bears no glory with it,
Rome doth command you to lay down your arms,
And bow the high front of your proud rebellion
Even to the common level of obedience,
That holds the rest of humankind. So doing,
Ye cancel all the dark and guilty past:
Silent Oblivion waits to wipe away
The record of your madness and your crimes;
And in the stead of bloody Vengeance claiming

Her penal due of torture, chains, and death,
Comes reconciling Mercy.

JOHN.

Mercy! Roman!
With what a humble and a modest truth
Thou dost commend thy unpresuming virtues.
Ye want not testimonies to your mildness—(10)
There, on yon lofty crosses, which surround us,
Each with a Jewish corpse sublimely rotting
On its most honourable eminence;
There's none in all that long and ghastly avenue
Whose wind-bleach'd bones depose not of thy mercy.
We know our brethren, and we thank thee too;
A courteous welcome hast thou given them, Roman,
Who have abandon'd us in the hour of peril.
They fled to 'scape their ruthless countrymen;
And, in good truth, their City of Refuge seems
To have found them fair and gentle entertainment.

SIMON.

Peace, John of Galilee! and I will answer

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARAS

This purple-mantled Captain of the Gentiles;
But in far other tone than he is wont
To hear about his silken couch of feasting
Amid his pamper'd parasites.—I speak to thee,
Titus, as warrior should accost a warrior.
The world, thou boastest, is Rome's slave; the sun
Rises and sets upon no realm but yours;
Ye plant your giant foot in either ocean,
And vaunt that all which ye o'erstride is Rome's.
But think ye, that because the common earth
Surfeits your pride with homage, that our land,
Our separate, peculiar, sacred land,
Portion'd and seal'd unto us by the God
Who made the round world and the crystal heavens;
A wond'rous land, where Nature's common course
Is strange and out of use, so oft the Lord
Invades it with miraculous intervention;
Think ye this land shall be an Heathen heritage,
An high place for your Moloch? Haughty Gentile
Even now ye walk on ruin and on prodigy.

The air ye breathe is heavy and o'ercharged
With your dark gathering doom; and if our earth
Do yet in its disdain endure the footing
Of your arm'd legions, 'tis because it labours
With silent throes of expectation, waiting
The signal of your scattering. Lo! the mountains
Bend o'er you with their huge and lowering shadows,
Ready to rush and overwhelm: the winds
Do listen panting for the tardy presence
Of Him that shall avenge. And there is scorn,
Yea, there is laughter in our fathers' tombs,
To think that Heathen conqueror doth aspire
To lord it over God's Jerusalem!
Yea, in Hell's deep and desolate abode,
Where dwell the perish'd kings, the chief of earth;
They whose idolatrous warfare erst assail'd
The Holy City, and the chosen people;
They wait for thee, the associate of their hopes
And fatal fall, to join their ruin'd conclave.
He whom the Red Sea 'whelm'd with all his host,

Pharaoh, the Egyptian; and the kings of Canaan;
The Philistine, the Dagon worshipper;
Moab, and Edom, and fierce Amalek;
And he of Babylon, whose multitudes,
Even on the hills where gleam your myriad spears,(11)
In one brief night the invisible Angel swept
With the dark, noiseless shadow of his wing,
And morn beheld the fierce and riotous camp
One cold, and mute, and tombless cemetery,
Sennacherib: all, all are risen, are moved;
Yea, they take up the taunting song of welcome
To him who, like themselves, hath madly warr'd
'Gainst Zion's walls, and miserably fallen
Before the avenging God of Israel!

THE JEWS.

Oh, holy Simon! Oh, prophetic Simon!
Lead thou, lead thou against the Gentile host,
And we will ask no angel breath to blast them.
The valour of her children soon shall scatter
The spoiler from the rescued walls of Salem,

Even till the wolves of Palestine are glutted
With Roman carnage.

AMARIAH.

Blow, ye sacred priests,
Your trumpets, as when Jericho of old
Cast down its prostrate walls at Joshua's feet!

PLACIDUS.

Let the Jew speak, the captive of Jotapata;
Haply they'll reverence one, and him the bravest
Of their own kindred.

TERENTIUS.

See! he speaks to them;
And they do listen, though their menacing brows
Lower with a darker and more furious hate.

JOSEPH.

Yet, yet a little while—ye see me rise,
Oh, men of Israel, brethren, countrymen!
Even from the earth ye see me rise, where lone,
And sorrowful, and fasting, I have sate
These three long days; sad sackcloth on the limbs

Which once were wont to wear a soldier's raiment,
And ashes on the head, which ye of old
Did honour, when its helmed glories shone
Before you in the paths of battle. Hear me,
Ye that, as I, adore the Law, the Prophets;
And at the ineffable thrice-holiest name
Bow down your awe-struck foreheads to the ground.
I am not here to tell you, men of Israel,
That it is madness to contend with Rome;
That it were wisdom to submit and follow
The common fortunes of the universe;
For ye would answer, that 'tis glorious madness
To stand alone amid the enslaved world
Freedom's last desperate champions: ye would answer,
That the slave's wisdom to the free-born man
Is basest folly. Oh, my countrymen!
Before no earthly king do I command you
To fall subservient, not all-conquering Cæsar,
But in a mightier name I summon you,
The King of Kings! He, he is manifest

In the dark visitation that is on you.
'Tis He, whose loosed and raging ministers,
Wild War, gaunt Famine, leprous Pestilence,
But execute his delegated wrath.
Yea, by the fulness of your crimes, 'tis He.
  Alas! shall I weep o'er thee, or go down
And grovel in the dust, and hide myself
From mine own shame? Oh, thou defiled Jerusalem!
That drinkest thine own blood as from a fountain;
That hast piled up the fabric of thy guilt
To such portentous height, that earth is darken'd
With its huge shadow—that dost boast the monuments
Of murder'd prophets, and dost make the robes
Of God's High-priest a title and a claim
To bloodiest slaughter—thou that every day
Dost trample down the thunder-given Law,
Even with the pride and joy of him that treads
The purple vintage—And oh thou, our Temple!
That wert of old the Beauty of Holiness,
The chosen, unapproachable abode
Of Him which dwelt between the cherubim,

Thou art a charnel-house, and sepulchre
Of slaughter'd men, a common butchery
Of civil strife;—and hence proclaim I, brethren,
It is the Lord who doth avenge his own:
The Lord, who gives you over to the wicked,
That ye may perish by their wickedness.
Oh! ye that do disdain to be Rome's slaves,
And yet are sold unto a baser bondage,
One that, like iron, eats into your souls.
Robbers, and Zealots, and wild Edomites!
Yea, these are they that sit in Moses' seat,
Wield Joshua's sword, and fill the throne of David;
Yea, these are they——

AMARIAH.

I'll hear no more—the foe
Claims from our lips the privilege of reply.
Here is our answer to the renegade,
A javelin to his pale and coward heart! (12)

JOSEPH.

I am struck, but not to death! that yet is wanting
To Israel's guilt.

JEWS.

Oh, noble Amariah!
Well hast thou spoken! well hast thou replied!
Lead—lead—we'll follow noble Amariah!

TITUS.

Now, Mercy, to the winds! I cast thee off—
My soul's forbidden luxury, I abjure thee!
Thou much-abused attribute of gods
And godlike men. 'Twas nature's final struggle;
And now, whate'er thou art, thou unseen prompter!
That in the secret chambers of my soul
Darkly abidest, and hast still rebuked
The soft compunctious weakness of mine heart,
I here surrender thee myself. Now wield me
Thine instrument of havoc and of horror,
Thine to the extremest limits of revenge;
Till not a single stone of yon proud city
Remain; and even the vestiges of ruin
Be utterly blotted from the face of earth!

Streets of Jerusalem near the Inner Wall.

Miriam, Salone.

MIRIAM.

Sweet sister, whither in such haste?

SALONE.

And know'st thou not
My customary seat, where I look down
And see the glorious battle deepen round me?
Oh! it is spirit-stirring to behold
The crimson garments waving in the dust,
The eagles glancing in the clouded sunshine.

MIRIAM.

Salone! in this dark and solemn hour,
Were it not wiser that the weak and helpless,
Bearing their portion in the common danger,
Should join their feeble efforts to defend—

Should be upon their knees in fervent prayer
Unto the Lord of Battles?

SALONE.

Yes; I know
That Zion's daughters are set forth to lead
Their suppliant procession to the gates
Of the Holy Temple. But Salone goes
Where she may see the God whom they adore
In the stern deeds of valiant men, that war
To save that Temple from the dust.
Behold!
I mount my throne, and here I sit the queen
Of the majestic tumult that beneath me
Is maddening into conflict. Lo! I bind
My dark locks, that they spread not o'er my sight.
Now flash the bright sun from your gleaming arms,
Shake it in broad sheets from your banner folds,
Mine eyes will still endure the blaze, and pierce
The thickest!

MIRIAM.

And thou hast no tears to blind thee?

SALONE.

Behold! behold! from Olivet they pour,
Thousands on thousands, in their martial order.
Kedron's dark valley, like Gennesareth,
When over it the cold moon shines through storms,
Topping its dark waves with uncertain light,
Is tossing with wild plumes and gleaming spears.
Solemnly the stern lictors move, and brandish
Their rod-bound axes; and the eagles seem,
With wings dispread, to watch their time for swooping!
The towers are moving on; and lo! the engines,
As though instinct with life, come heavily labouring
Upon their ponderous wheels; they nod destruction
Against our walls. Lo! lo, our gates fly open:
There Eleazar—there the mighty John—
Ben Cathla there, and Edom's crested sons.
Oh! what a blaze of glory gathers round them!
How proudly move they in invincible strength!

MIRIAM.

And thou canst speak thus with a steadfast voice,
When in one hour may death have laid in the dust
Those breathing, moving, valiant multitudes?

SALONE.

And thou! oh thou, that movest to the battle
Even like the mountain stag to the running river,
Pause, pause, that I may gaze my fill!—

MIRIAM.

Our father!
Salone! is't our father that thou seest?

SALONE.

Lo! lo! the war hath broken off to admire him!
The glory of his presence awes the conflict!
The son of Cæsar on his armed steed
Rises, impatient of the plumed helms
That from his sight conceal young Amariah.

MIRIAM.

Alas! what means she? Hear me yet a word!
I will return or ere the wounded men

Require our soft and healing hands to soothe them.
Thou'lt not forget, Salone—if thou seest
Our father in the fearful hour of peril,
Lift up thy hands and pray.

SALONE.

To gaze on him—
It is like gazing on the morning sun,
When he comes scattering from his burning orb
The vapourish clouds!

MIRIAM.

She hears, she heeds me not.
And here's a sight and sound to me more welcome
Than the wild fray of men who slay and die—
Our maidens on their way to the Holy Temple.
I'll mingle with them, and I'll pray with them;
But through a name, by them unknown or scorn'd,
My prayers shall mount to heaven.
Behold them here!
Behold them, how unlike to what they were!
Oh! virgin daughters of Jerusalem!

Ye were a garden once of Hermon's lilies,
That bashfully upon their tremulous stems
Bow to the wooing breath of the sweet spring.
Graceful ye were! there needed not the tone
Of tabret, harp, or lute, to modulate
Your soft harmonious footsteps; your light tread
Fell like a natural music. Ah! how deeply
Hath the cold blight of misery prey'd upon you.
How heavily ye drag your weary footsteps,
Each like a mother mourning her one child.
Ah me! I feel it almost as a sin,
To be so much less sad, less miserable.

CHORUS.

King of Kings! and Lord of Lords!
Thus we move, our sad steps timing
To our cymbals' feeblest chiming,
Where thy House its rest accords.
Chased and wounded birds are we,
Through the dark air fled to thee;

To the shadow of thy wings,
Lord of Lords! and King of Kings!

Behold, oh Lord! the Heathen tread(13)
  The branches of thy fruitful vine,
That its luxurious tendrils spread
  O'er all the hills of Palestine.
And now the wild boar comes to waste
Even us, the greenest boughs and last,
That, drinking of thy choicest dew,
On Zion's hill in beauty grew.

No! by the marvels of thine hand,
Thou still wilt save thy chosen land!
By all thine ancient mercies shown,
By all our fathers' foes o'erthrown;
By the Egyptian's car-borne host,
Scatter'd on the Red Sea coast;
By that wide and bloodless slaughter
Underneath the drowning water.

Like us in utter helplessness,
In their last and worst distress—
On the sand and sea-weed lying,
Israel pour'd her doleful sighing;
While before the deep sea flow'd,
And behind fierce Egypt rode—
To their fathers' God they pray'd,
To the Lord of Hosts for aid.

On the margin of the flood
With lifted rod the Prophet stood;
And the summon'd east wind blew,
And aside it sternly threw
The gather'd waves, that took their stand,
Like crystal rocks, on either hand,
Or walls of sea-green marble piled
Round some irregular city wild.

Then the light of morning lay
On the wonder-paved way,

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWA... [library stamp]

Where the treasures of the deep
In their caves of coral sleep.
The profound abysses, where
Was never sound from upper air,
Rang with Israel's chanted words,
King of Kings! and Lord of Lords!

Then with bow and banner glancing,
  On exulting Egypt came,
With her chosen horsemen prancing,
  And her cars on wheels of flame,
In a rich and boastful ring
All around her furious king.

But the Lord from out his cloud,
The Lord look'd down upon the proud;
And the host drave heavily
Down the deep bosom of the sea.

With a quick and sudden swell
Prone the liquid ramparts fell;

Over horse, and over car,
Over every man of war,
Over Pharaoh's crown of gold,
The loud thundering billows roll'd.
As the level waters spread
Down they sank, they sank like lead,
Down without a cry or groan.
And the morning sun, that shone
On myriads of bright-armed men,
Its meridian radiance then
Cast on a wide sea, heaving as of yore,
Against a silent, solitary shore.

Then did Israel's maidens sing,
Then did Israel's timbrels ring,
To him, the King of Kings! that in the sea,
The Lord of Lords! had triumph'd gloriously.

And our timbrels' flashing chords,
King of Kings! and Lord of Lords!

Shall they not attuned be
Once again to victory?
Lo! a glorious triumph now!
  Lo! against thy people come
A mightier Pharaoh! wilt not thou
  Craze the chariot wheels of Rome?
Will not, like the Red Sea wave,
  Thy stern anger overthrow?
And from worse than bondage save,
  From sadder than Egyptian woe,
Those whose silver cymbals glance,
Those who lead the suppliant dance,
Thy race, the only race that sings
Lord of Lords! and King of Kings!

Streets of Jerusalem—Evening.

MIRIAM.

Ah me! ungentle Eve, how long thou lingerest!
Oh! when it was a grief to me to lose
Yon azure mountains, and the lovely vales
That from our city walls seem wandering on
Under the cedar-tufted precipices;
With what an envious and a hurrying swiftness
Didst thou descend, and pour thy mantling dews
And dew-like silence o'er the face of things;
Shrouding each spot I loved the most with suddenest
And deepest darkness; making mute the groves
Where the birds nestled under the still leaves!
But now, how slowly, heavily thou fallest!
Now, when thou mightest hush the angry din
Of battle, and conceal the murtherous foes
From mutual slaughter, and pour oil and wine

Into the aching hurts of wounded men!
But is it therefore only that I chide thee
With querulous impatience? will the night
Once more, the secret, counsel-keeping night,
Veil the dark path which leads to Siloe's fountain?
Which leads—why should I blush to add—to Javan?
  Oh thou, my teacher! I forgot thee not
This morning in the Temple—I forgot not
The name thou taught'st me to adore, nor thee——
  But what have I to do with thoughts like these,
While all around the stunning battle roars
Like a gorged lion o'er his mangled prey?
Alas! alas! but the human appetite
For shedding blood,—that is insatiate!
—Time was, that if I heard a sound of arms,
My heart would shudder, and my limbs would fail.
When, to have seen a dying man had been
A dark event, that with its fearful memory
Had haunted many a sad and sleepless night.
But now—now——

SALONE, MIRIAM.

MIRIAM.

Sister! my Salone! Sister!
Why art thou flying with that frantic mien,
Thy veil cast back and streaming with thine hair?
Oh, harbinger of misery! I read
A sad disastrous story in thy face;
'Tis o'er, and God hath given the city of David
Unto the stranger.

SALONE.

Oh! not yet; our wall,
Our last, our strongest wall, is still unshaken,
Though the fierce engines with their brazen heads
Strike at it sternly and incessantly.

MIRIAM.

Then God preserve the lost! and oh, our father!

SALONE.

All is not lost! for Amariah stands

Amid the rushing sheets of molten fire,
Even like an Angel in the flaming centre
Of the sun's noontide orb——
Hark! hark!—who comes?

SIMON.

Back—back—I say, by——

MIRIAM.

'Tis my father's voice!
It sounds in wrath, perhaps in blasphemy;
Yet 'tis my living father's voice——He's here.

Simon, Miriam, Salone.

SIMON.

Now may your native towers rush o'er your heads
With horrible downfall, may the treacherous stones
Start underneath your footing, cast you down,
For the iron wheels of vengeance to rush o'er you—
Flight! flight! still flight!—Oh, infidel renegades!

The above, John, Amariah, High-Priest, &c.

SIMON.

Now, by the living God of Israel, John!
Your silken slaves, your golden-sandal'd men,—
Your men! I should have said, your girls of Galilee!—
They will not soil their dainty hands with blood.
Their myrrh-dew'd locks are all too smoothly curl'd
To let the riotous and dishevelling airs
Of battle violate their crisped neatness.
Oh! their nice mincing steps are all unfit
To tread the red and slippery paths of war;
Yet they can trip it lightly when they turn
To fly——

JOHN.

Thou lying and injurious Pharisee!
For every man of thine that in the trenches
Hardly hath consented to lay down his life,
Twice ten of mine have leap'd from off the walls,

Grappling a Gentile by the shivering helm,
And proudly died upon his dying foe.
But tell thou me, thou only faithful Simon!
Where are the men of Edom, whom we saw
Stretching their amicable hands in parley,
And quietly mingling with the unharming foe?

SIMON.

Where are they? where the traitors meet, where all
The foes of Simon and Jerusalem,
In th' everlasting fire! I slew them, John,—
Thou saw'st my red hand glorious with their blood.

JOHN.

False traitors! in their very treachery false!
They would betray without their lord—In truth,
Treason, like empire, brooks not rivalry.

SIMON.

Now, by the bones of Abraham our father,
I do accuse thee here, false John of Galilee!
Or, if the title please thee, John the Tyrant!
Here, in our arm'd, embattled Sanhedrim,

Thou art our fall's prime cause, and fatal origin!
From thee, as from a foul and poisonous fount,
Pour the black waters of calamity
O'er Judah's land! God hates thee, man of Belial!
And the destroying bolts that fall on thee
From the insulted heavens, blast all around thee
With spacious and unsparing desolation.
Hear me, ye men of Israel! do ye wonder
That all your baffled valour hath recoil'd
From the fierce Gentile onset? that your walls
Are prostrate, and your last hath scarce repell'd
But now the flush'd invader? 'Tis from this—
That the Holy City will not be defended
By womanish men, and loose adulterers.
Hear me, I say, this son of Gischala,
This lustful tyrant, hath he not defiled
Your daughters, in the open face of day
Done deeds of shame, which midnight hath no darkness
So deep as to conceal? It is his pride
T' offend high heaven with crimes before unknown—

Hath he not mock'd the austere and solemn fasts,
And sabbaths of our Law, by revellings
And most heaven-tainting wantonness? Yea, more,
Hath he not made God's festivals a false
And fraudful pretext for his deeds of guilt?
Yea, on the day of the Unleavened Bread,
Even in the garb and with the speech of worship,
Went he not up into the very Temple? (14)
And there before the Veil, even in the presence
Of th' Holy of Holies, did he not break forth
With armed and infuriate violence?
Then did the pavement, which was never red
But with the guiltless blood of sacrifice,
Reek with the indelible and thrice-foulest stain
Of human carnage. Yea, with impious steel
He slew the brethren that were kneeling with him
At the same altar, uttering the same prayers.
Speak, Eleazar, was't not so?—thou dar'st not
Affirm, nor canst deny thine own betrayal.)
And since that cursed hour of guilty triumph

There hath he held the palace of his lusts, (15)
Turning God's Temple to a grove of Belial:
Even till men wonder that the pillars start not
From their fix'd sockets; that the offended roof
Fall not at once, and crush in his own shame
The blasphemous invader. Yea, not yet,
I have not fathom'd yet his depth of sin.
His common banquet is the Bread of Offering,
The vessels of the altar are the cups
From which he drains his riotous drunkenness.
The incense, that was wont to rise to heaven
Pure as an infant's breath, now foully stagnates
Within the pestilent haunts of his lasciviousness.
Can these things be, and yet our favour'd arms
Be clad with victory? Can the Lord of Israel
For us, the scanty remnant of his worshippers,
Neglect to vindicate his tainted shrine,
His sanctuary profaned, his outraged Laws?

JOHN.

Methinks, if Simon had but fought to-day

As valiantly as Simon speaks, the foe
Had never seen to-morrow's onset—

SIMON.

Brethren,
Yet I demand your audience——

JEWS.

Hear him! hear
The righteous Simon!

SIMON.

Men of Israel!
Why stand ye thus in wonder? where the root
Is hollow, can the tree be sound? Man's deeds
Are as man's doctrines; and who hopes for ought
But wantonness and foul iniquity
From that blaspheming and heretical sect,
The serpent spawn of Sadoc, that corrupt
The Law of Moses and disdain the Prophets?
That grossly do defraud the eternal soul
Of its immortal heritage, and doom it
To rot for ever with its kindred clay

In the grave's deep unbroken prison-house?
Yea, they dispeople with their infidel creed
Heaven of its holy Angels; laugh to scorn
That secret band of ministering Spirits;
That therefore, in their indignation, stand
Aloof, and gaze upon our gathering ruin
With a contemptuous and pitiless scorn.
They that were wont to range around our towers
Their sunlight-wing'd battalia, and to war
Upon our part with adamantine arms.

JOHN.

Oh! impotent and miserable arguer!
Will he that values not the stake as boldly
Confront the peril as the man that feels
His all upon the hazard? Men of Galilee,
The cup of life hath sparkled to our lips,
And we have drain'd its tide of love and joy,
Till our veins almost burst with o'erwrought rapture.
And well we know, that generous cup, once dash'd,
Shall never mantle more to the cold lips

HARAJA SERFOJI'S

Of the earth-bound dead. And therefore do we fight
For life as for a mistress, that being lost,
Is lost for ever. To be what we are
Is all we hope or pray for; think ye, then,
That we shall tamely yield the contest up,
And calmly acquiesce in our extinction?
We know that there stands yawning at our feet
The gulf, where dark Annihilation dwells
With Solitude, her sister; and we fix
Our stedfast footing on the perilous verge,
And grapple to the last with the fierce foe
That seeks to plunge us down; and where's the strength
That can subdue despair?——For the other charge,
We look not, Simon, to the sky, nor pray
For sightless and impalpable messengers
To spare us the proud peril of the war.
Ourselves are our own Angels! we implore not
Or supernatural or spiritual aid;
We have our own good arms, that God hath given us,
And valiant hearts to wield those mighty arms.

SIMON.

Oh heavens! oh heavens, ye hear it, and endure it!
Outwearied by the all-frequent blasphemy
To an indignant patience: and the Just
Still, still must suffer the enforced alliance
Of men whose fellowship is death and ruin.

JOHN.

Why, thou acknowledged Prince of Murderers!
Captain Assassin! Lord and Chief of Massacre!
That pourest blood like water, yet dost deem
That thou canst wash the foul and scarlet stain
From thy polluted soul, as easily
As from thy dainty ever-dabbling hands,
That wouldst appease with rite and ordinance,
And festival, and slavish ceremony,
And prayers that weary even the stones thou kneel'st on,
The God whose image hourly thou effacest
With mangling and remorseless steel! 'Tis well
That graves are silent, and that dead men's souls
Assert not the proud privilege thou wouldst give them;

For if they did, Heaven's vaults would ring so loudly
With imprecations 'gainst the righteous Simon,
That they would pluck by force a plague upon us,
To which the Roman, and the wasting famine,
Were soft and healing mercies.

SIMON.

Liar and slave!
There is no rich libation to the All-Just
So welcome as the blood of renegades
And traitors——

MIRIAM *(apart.)*

Oh! I dare not listen longer!
The big drops stand upon his brow; his voice
Is faint and fails, and there's no food at home.
The night is dark—I'll go once more, or perish.
[*Departs unperceived.*

SIMON.

What, John of Galilee! because my voice
Is hoarse with speaking of thy crimes, dost scoff,
And wag thy head at me, and answer laughter?

Now, if thy veins run not pure gall, I'll broach
Their tide, and prove if all my creed be false;
If traitors' reeking blood smell not to heaven
Like a sweet sacrifice.

JOHN.

Why, ay! the victim
Is bound to th' horns of th' altar! Strike, I say,
He waits thee—Strike!

HIGH-PRIEST.

Hold, Chiefs of Israel!
Just Simon! valiant John! once more I dare
To cast myself between you, the High-Priest,
Who by his holy office calls on you
To throw aside your trivial private wrongs,
And vindicate offence more rank and monstrous.
Avenge your God! and then avenge yourselves!
The Temple is polluted—Israel's Lord
Mock'd in his presence. Prayers even thence have risen,
Prayers from the jealous holy Sanctuary,
Even to the Crucified Man our fathers slew.

JEWS.

The Crucified! the Man of Nazareth!

HIGH-PRIEST.

This morn, as wont, our maidens had gone up
To chant their suppliant hymn; and they had raised
The song that Israel on the Red Sea shore
Took up triumphant; and they clos'd the strain,
That, like th' Egyptian and his car-borne host,
The billows of Heaven's wrath might overwhelm
The Gentile foe, and so preserve Jerusalem;
When at the close and fall a single voice
Linger'd upon the note, with, "Be it done
"Through Jesus Christ, thine only Son."
My spirit shrank within me; horror-struck,
I listen'd; all was silence! Then again
I look'd upon the veiled damsels, all
With one accord took up the swelling strain
To him that triumph'd gloriously. I turn'd
To the Ark and Mercy Seat, and then again
I heard that single, soft, melodious voice,

"Lord of Mercies be it done,
"Through Jesus Christ, thine only Son."
Here, then, assembled Lords of Israel,
Whoever be the victim, I demand her;
Your wisdom must detect, your justice wreak
Fit punishment upon the accursed sacrilege.

SALONE *(apart.)*

Miriam! Miriam! Ha!—She's fled.—Guilt! Guilt
Prophetic of the damning accusation
It doth deserve! Apostate! 'twere a sin
Against Jerusalem and Heaven to spare thee!

HIGH-PRIEST.

I do commend you, brethren, for your silence!
I see the abhorrence labouring in your hearts,
Too deep and too infuriate for words.

SIMON.

Now, if it were my child, my Sarah's child,
The child that she died blessing, I'd not sleep
Till the stones crush her. Yea, thus, thus I'd grasp,

And hurl destruction on her guilty head.
Here, John, I pledge mine hand to thee, till vengeance
Seize on the false and insolent blasphemer.

(SALONE, *half unveiled, rushing forward, stops irresolutely.*)

Their eyes oppress me—my heart chokes my voice—
And my lips cling together——Oh! my mother,
Upon thy death-bed didst thou not beseech us
To love each other!

HIGH-PRIEST.

Veiled maid, what art thou?

SALONE.

Off! off! the blood of Abraham swells within me—
As I cast down my veil, I cast away
All fear, all tenderness, all fond remorse.
It is too good a death for one so guilty
To perish for Jerusalem——

[*She stands unveiled.*

SIMON.

Salone!

HIGH-PRIEST.

The admired daughter of the noble Simon!

VOICE AT A DISTANCE.

Israel! Israel!

HIGH-PRIEST.

Who is this, that speaks
With such a shrilling accent of command?

VOICE.

Israel! Israel!

JEWS.

Back! give place! the Prophet!

ABIRAM *(the false prophet.)*

Israel! Israel!

HIGH-PRIEST.

Peace!

ABIRAM.

Ay! peace, I say!
The wounds are bound; the blood is stanch'd! and hate
Is turn'd to love! and rancorous jealousy
To kindred concord! and the clashing swords

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARAS

To bridal sounds! the fury of the feud
To revel and the jocund nuptial feast.

HIGH-PRIEST.

What means Abiram?

ABIRAM.

It is from on High.
Brave Amariah, son of John! Salone,
Daughter of Simon! thus I join their hands;
And thus I bless the wedded and the beautiful!
And thus I bind the Captains of Jerusalem
In the strong bonds of unity and peace.—

And where is now the wine for the bridegroom's rosy cup? (16)
And the tabret and the harp for the chamber of the bride?
Lo! bright as burnish'd gold the lamps are sparkling up,
And the odours of the incense are breathing far and wide;
And the maidens' feet are glancing in the virgins' wedding train;
And the sad streets of Salem are alive with joy again!

THE JEWS.

Long live Salone! Long live Amariah!

SALONE.

Am I awake?—how came I here unveil'd
Among the bold and glaring eyes of men?

THE JEWS.

Long live Salone! Long live Amariah!

SIMON.

He speaks from Heaven—accept'st thou, John of Galilee,
Heaven's terms of peace?

JOHN.

From earth or heaven, I care not—
What says my boy?

AMARIAH.

Oh! rather let me ask,
What says the maid? Oh! raven-hair'd Salone,
Why dost thou crowd thy jealous veil around thee?
Look on me freely; beauteous in thy freedom;
As when this morn I saw thee, on our walls,
Thy hair cast back, and bare thy marble brow

To the bright wooing of the enamour'd sun:
They were my banner, Beauty, those dark locks;
And in the battle 'twas my pride, my strength,
To think that eyes like thine were gazing on me.

SALONE.

Oh no, thou saw'st me not!—Oh, Amariah!
What Prophets speak must be fulfill'd. 'Twere vain
T' oppose at once the will of Heaven—and thee.

JOHN.

Now, if there be enough of generous food,
A cup of wine in all the wasted city,
We'll have a jocund revel.

SIMON.

Prophet Abiram,
I have a question for thy secret ear.
Thou man, whose eyes are purged from earthly film,
Seest thou no further down the tide of time?
Beyond this bridal nothing?—Answer me!
For it should seem this designated union
Of two so noble, this conspiring blood

Of Israel's chiefs, portends some glorious fruit
To ripen in the deep futurity.

ABIRAM.

Simon, what meanest thou?

SIMON.

The Hope of Israel!
Shall it not dawn from darkness? Oh! begot
In Judah's hour of peril, and conceived
In her extreme of agony, what birth
So meet and fitting for the great Discomfiter?

ABIRAM.

A light falls on me.

SIMON.

Prophet! what shall dye
The robe of purple with so bright a grain
As Roman blood? Before our gates are met
The lords of empire, and our walls may laugh
Their siege to scorn, even till the BRANCH be grown
That's not yet planted—Yea, the wrested sceptre
Of earth, the sole dominion——Back, Abiram,

To thy prophetic cave—kneel, pray, fast, weep;
And thou shalt bless us with far nobler tidings,
And we will kiss thy feet, thou Harbinger
Of Judah's glory——

Now lead on the Bridal.

Blow trumpets! shout, exulting Israel!
Shout Amariah! shout again Salone!
Shout louder yet, the Bridegroom and the Bride!
Rejoice, oh Zion, now on all thy hills!
City of David, through thy streets rejoice!

Fountain of Siloe—Night—An approaching Storm.

MIRIAM.

He is not here! and yet he might have known
That the cold gloom of the tempestuous skies
Could never change a faithful heart like mine.
He might have known me not a maid to love
Under the melting moonlight, and soft stars,
And to fall off in darkness and in storm.
Ah! seal'd for ever be my slanderous lips!
Alas! it is the bitterest pang of misery
That it will force from us unworthy doubts
Of the most tried and true. Oh, Javan, Javan!
It was but now that with presumptuous heart
I did repine against the all-gracious heavens,
That wrapt me round in charitable darkness,
Because my erring feet had well-nigh miss'd
Their known familiar path.

Javan, Miriam.

JAVAN.

What's there? I see
A white and spirit-like gleaming—It must be!
I see her not, yet feel that it is Miriam,
By the indistinct and dimly visible grace
That haunts her motions; by her tread, that falls
Trembling and soft like moonlight on the earth.
What dost thou here? now—now? where every moment
The soldiers prowl, and meeting centinels
Challenge each other? I have watch'd for thee
As prisoners for the hour of their deliverance;
Yet did I pray, love! that thou might'st not come,
Even that thou might'st be faithless to thy vows,
Rather than meet this peril——Miriam,
Why art thou here?

MIRIAM.

Does Javan ask me why?

Because I saw my father pine with hunger—
Because——I never hope to come again.

JAVAN.

Too true! this night, this fatal night, if Heaven
Strike not their conquering host, the foe achieves
His tardy victory. Round the shatter'd walls
There is the smother'd hum of preparation.
With stealthy footsteps, and with muffled arms,
Along the trenches, round the lowering engines,
I saw them gathering: men stood whispering men,
As though revealing some portentous secret;
At every sound cried, Hist! and look'd reproachfully
Upon each other. Now and then a light
From some far part of the encircling camp
Breaks suddenly out, and then is quench'd as suddenly.
The forced unnatural quiet, that pervades
Those myriads of arm'd and sleepless warriors,
Presages earthly tempest; as yon clouds,
That in their mute and ponderous blackness hang

...ARAJA SERFOGI'S ...

Over our heads, a tumult in the skies—
The earth and heaven alike are terribly calm.

MIRIAM.

Alas! alas! give me the food! let's say
Farewell as fondly as a dying man
Should say it to a dying woman!

JAVAN.

Miriam!
It shall not be. *He*, *He* hath given command,
That when the signs are manifest, we should flee (17)
Unto the mountains*.

MIRIAM.

Javan, tempt me not,
My soul is weak. Hast thou not said of old,
How dangerous 'tis to wrest the words of truth
To the excusing our own fond desires?
There's an eternal mandate, unrepeal'd,
Nor e'er to be rescinded, "Love thy Father!"
God speaks with many voices; one in the heart,

* Matt. xxiv. 16.

True though instinctive; one in the Holy Law,
The first that's coupled with a gracious promise.

JAVAN.

Yet are his words, "Leave all, and follow me,
"Thou shalt not love thy father more than me"—*
Dar'st disobey them?

MIRIAM.

Javan, while I tread
The path of duty I am following him,
And loving whom I ought to love, love him.

JAVAN.

If thou couldst save or succour—if this night
Were not the last—

MIRIAM.

Oh, dearest, think awhile!
It matters little at what hour o' the day
The righteous falls asleep, death cannot come
To him untimely who is fit to die:
The less of this cold world, the more of heaven,

* Matt. x. 7.

The briefer life, the earlier immortality.
But every moment to the man of guilt
And bloodshed, one like——ah me! like my father,
Each instant rescued from the grasp of death,
May be a blessed chosen opportunity
For the everlasting mercy—Think what 'tis
For time's minutest period to delay
An infidel's death, a murderer's——

JAVAN.

Go! go, dearest!
If I were dying, I would have thee go—
Oh! thou inspher'd, unearthly loveliness!
Danger may gather round thee, like the clouds
Round one of heaven's pure stars, thou'lt hold within
Thy course unsullied.

MIRIAM.

This is worse than all!
Oh! mock not thus with wild extravagant praise
A very weak and most unworthy girl.
Javan, one last, one parting word with thee—

There have been times, when I have said light words,
As maidens use, that made thy kind heart bleed;
There have been moments, when I have seen thee sad,
And I have cruelly sported with thy sadness:
I have been proud, oh! very proud, to hear
Thy fond lips dwell on beauty, when thine eyes
Were on this thin and wasted form of mine.
Forgive me, oh! forgive me, for I deem'd
The hour would surely come, when the fond bride
Might well repay the maiden's waywardness.
Oh! look not thus o'erjoy'd, for if I thought
We e'er could meet again this side the grave,
Trust me, I had been charier of my tenderness.
Yet one word more—I do mistrust thee, Javan,
Though coldly thou dost labour to conceal it;
Thou hast some frantic scheme to risk for mine
Thy precious life—Beseech thee, heap not thou
More sorrows on the o'erburthen'd.

JAVAN.

Think'st thou, then,

I have no trust but in this arm of flesh
To save thee?

MIRIAM.

Oh, kind Javan! pray not thou
That I may live, that is too wild a prayer;
That I may die unspotted, be thy suit
To Him who loves the spotless.

JAVAN.

Ha—the thought!
It pierces like a sword into my heart!

MIRIAM.

And think'st thou mine unwounded?—Fare thee well!
Our presence does but rack each other's souls.
Farewell! and if thou lovest when I am dead,
May she be to thee, all I hoped to be.

JAVAN.

Go—go—

MIRIAM.

Thou bidst me part, and yet detain'st me
With clinging grasp—ah no, 'tis I clasp thee.

I knew not that my fond unconscious hand
Had been so bold—Oh, Javan! ere the morn
'T will have no power t'offend thee—'t will be cold.

JAVAN.

Offend me! Miriam, when thou'rt above
Among the Saints, and I in the sinful world,
How terrible 'twill be if I should forfeit
The hope of meeting thee in blessedness.

MIRIAM.

Forfeit! with faith like thine?

JAVAN.

Thou well rebukest me.
To thy Redeemer I commit thee now,
To leave thee here, or take thee to himself.
Farewell, farewell! the life of this sad heart,—
Dearer than life——I look for thee, and lo!
Nought but blind darkness——
Save where yon mad city,
As though at peace and in luxurious joy,
Is hanging out her bright and festive lamps.

There have been tears from holier eyes than mine
Pour'd o'er thee, Zion! yea, the Son of Man
This thy devoted hour foresaw and wept.
And I—can I refrain from weeping? Yes,
My country, in thy darker destiny
Will I awhile forget mine own distress.

I feel it now, the sad, the coming hour;
The signs are full, and never shall the sun
Shine on the cedar roofs of Salem more;
Her tale of splendor now is told and done:
Her wine-cup of festivity is spilt,
And all is o'er, her grandeur and her guilt.

Oh! fair and favour'd city, where of old
The balmy airs were rich with melody,
That led her pomp beneath the cloudless sky
In vestments flaming with the orient gold;
Her gold is dim, and mute her music's voice,
The Heathen o'er her perish'd pomp rejoice.

How stately then was every palm-deck'd street,
Down which the maidens danced with tinkling feet;
  How proud the elders in the lofty gate!
How crowded all her nation's solemn feasts
With white-rob'd Levites and high-mitred Priests;
  How gorgeous all her Temple's sacred state!
Her streets are razed, her maidens sold for slaves,
Her gates thrown down, her elders in their graves;
Her feasts are holden 'mid the Gentile's scorn,
By stealth her Priesthood's holy garments worn;
And where her Temple crown'd the glittering rock,
The wandering shepherd folds his evening flock.

When shall the work, the work of death begin?
When come the avengers of proud Judah's sin?—
Aceldama! accurs'd and guilty ground,
Gird all the city in thy dismal bound,
  Her price is paid, and she is sold like thou;
Let every ancient monument and tomb
Enlarge the border of its vaulted gloom,
  Their spacious chambers all are wanted now.

But nevermore shall yon lost city need
Those secret places for her future dead;
Of all her children, when this night is pass'd,
Devoted Salem's darkest, and her last,
Of all her children none is left to her,
Save those whose house is in the sepulchre.

Yet, guilty city, who shall mourn for thee?
Shall Christian voices wail thy devastation?
Look down! look down, avenged Calvary,
Upon thy late yet dreadful expiation.
Oh! long foretold, though slow accomplish'd fate,
"Her house is left unto her desolate;"
Proud Cæsar's ploughshare o'er her ruins driven,
Fulfils at length the tardy doom of heaven;
The wrathful vial's drops at length are pour'd
On the rebellious race that crucified their Lord!

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARA

Streets of Jerusalem—Night.

Many JEWS *meeting.*

FIRST JEW.

Saw ye it, father? saw ye what the city
Stands gazing at? As I pass'd through the streets,
There were pale women wandering up and down;
And on the house-tops there were haggard faces
Turn'd to the heavens, where'er the ghostly light
Fell on them. Even the prowling plunderers,
That break our houses for suspected food,
Their quick and stealthful footsteps check, and gasp
In wonder. They, that in deep weariness,
Or wounded in the battle of the morn,
Had cast themselves to slumber on the stones,
Lift up their drowsy heads, and languidly
Do shudder at the sight.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SA

SECOND JEW.

What sight? what say'st thou?

FIRST JEW.

The star, the star, the fiery-tressed star,
That all this fatal year hath hung in the heavens
Above us, gleaming like a bloody sword,
Twice hath it moved. Men cried aloud, "A tempest!"
And there was blackness, as of thunder clouds:
But yet that angry sign glared fiercely through them,
And the third time, with slow and solemn motion,
'Twas shaken and brandish'd.

SECOND JEW.

Timorous boy! thou speak'st
As though these things were strange. Why now we sleep
With prodigies ablaze in all the heavens,
And the earth teeming with portentous signs,
As sound as when the moon and constant stars
Beam'd quietly upon the slumbering earth
Their customary fires. Dost thou remember,
At Pentecost, when all the land of Judah

Stood round the Altar, at the dead of night,
A Light broke out, and all the Temple shone
With the meteorous glory? 'twas not like
The light of sun or moon, but it was clear
And bright as either, only that it wither'd
Men's faces to a hue like death.

THIRD JEW.

'Twas strange!
And, if I err not, on that very day,
The Priest led forth the spotless sacrifice,
And as he led it, it fell down, and cast
Its young upon the sacred pavement.

FOURTH JEW.

Brethren,
Have ye forgot the eve, when war broke out
Even in the heavens? all the wide northern sky
Was rocking with arm'd men and fiery chariots.
With an abrupt and sudden noiselessness,
Wildly, confusedly they cross'd and mingled,
As when the Red Sea waves dash'd to and fro
The crazed cars of Pharaoh——

THIRD JEW.

Who comes here
In his white robes so hastily?

FIRST JEW.

'Tis the Levite,
The Holy Aaron.

LEVITE.

Brethren! Oh, my Brethren!

THE JEWS.

Speak, Rabbi, all our souls thirst for thy words.

LEVITE.

But now within the Temple, as I minister'd,
There was a silence round us; the wild sounds
Of the o'erwearied war had fallen asleep.
A silence, even as though all earth were fix'd
Like us in adoration, when the gate,
The Eastern gate, with all its ponderous bars
And bolts of iron, started wide asunder,
And all the strength of man doth vainly toil
To close the stubborn and rebellious leaves.

FIRST JEW.

What now?

ANOTHER JEW.

What now! why all things sad and monstrous.
The Prophets stand aghast, and vainly seek,
Amid the thronging and tumultuous signs
Which crowd this wild disastrous night, the intent
Of the Eternal. Wonder breaks o'er wonder,
As clouds roll o'er each other in the skies;
And Terror, wantoning with man's perplexity,
No sooner hath infix'd the awed attention
On some strange prodigy, than it straight distracts it
To a stranger and more fearful.

THIRD JEW.

Hark! what's there?
Fresh horror!——

(At a distance.)

To the sound of timbrels sweet,(18)
Moving slow our solemn feet,

We have borne thee on the road,
To the virgin's blest abode;
With thy yellow torches gleaming,
And thy scarlet mantle streaming,
And the canopy above
Swaying as we slowly move.

Thou hast left the joyous feast,
And the mirth and wine have ceast;
And now we set thee down before
The jealously-unclosing door;
That the favour'd youth admits
Where the veiled virgin sits
In the bliss of maiden fear,
Waiting our soft tread to hear,
And the music's brisker din,
At the bridegroom's entering in,
Entering in a welcome guest
To the chamber of his rest.

SECOND JEW.

It is the bridal song of Amariah
And fair Salone. In the house of Simon
The rites are held; nor bears the Bridegroom home
His plighted Spouse, but there doth deck his chamber;
These perilous times dispensing with the rigor
Of ancient usage——

VOICE WITHIN.

Woe! woe! woe!

FIRST JEW.

Alas!
The son of Hananiah! is't not he?

THIRD JEW.

Whom said'st?

SECOND JEW.

Art thou a stranger in Jerusalem,
That thou rememberest not that fearful man?

FOURTH JEW.

Speak! speak! we know not all.

SECOND JEW.

Why thus it was:

A rude and homely dresser of the vine,
He had come up to the Feast of Tabernacles,
When suddenly a spirit fell upon him,
Evil or good we know not. Ever since,
(And now seven years are past since it befell,
Our city then being prosperous and at peace),
He hath gone wandering through the darkling streets
At midnight under the cold quiet stars;
He hath gone wandering through the crowded market
At noonday under the bright blazing sun,
With that one ominous cry of "Woe, woe, woe!"
Some scoff'd and mock'd him, some would give him food;
He neither curs'd the one, nor thank'd the other.
The Sanhedrim bade scourge him, and myself
Beheld him lash'd, till the bare bones stood out
Through the maim'd flesh, still, still he only cried,
Woe to the City, till his patience wearied
The angry persecutors. When they freed him,
'Twas still the same, the incessant Woe, woe, woe.
But when our siege began, awhile he ceased,

As though his prophecy were fulfill'd; till now
We had not heard his dire and boding voice.

WITHIN.

Woe! woe! woe!

JOSHUA, *the Son of Hananiah.*

Woe! woe!
  A voice from the East! a voice from the West!
  From the four winds a voice against Jerusalem!
  A voice against the Temple of the Lord!
  A voice against the Bridegrooms and the Brides!
  A voice against all people of the land!
Woe! woe! woe!

SECOND JEW.

They are the very words, the very voice
Which we have heard so long. And yet, methinks,
There is a mournful triumph in the tone
Ne'er heard before. His eyes, that were of old
Fix'd on the earth, now wander all abroad,
As though the tardy consummation
Afflicted him with wonder——Hark! again.

CHORUS OF MAIDENS.

Now the jocund song is thine,
Bride of David's kingly line!
How thy dove-like bosom trembleth,
And thy shrouded eye resembleth
Violets, when the dews of eve
A moist and tremulous glitter leave
On the bashful sealed lid!
Close within the bride-veil hid,
Motionless thou sit'st and mute;
Save that at the soft salute
Of each entering maiden friend
Thou dost rise and softly bend.

Hark! a brisker, merrier glee!
The door unfolds,—'tis he, 'tis he.
Thus we lift our lamps to meet him,
Thus we touch our lutes to greet him.
Thou shalt give a fonder meeting,
Thou shalt give a tenderer greeting.

JOSHUA.

Woe! woe!

A voice from the East! a voice from the West!
From the four winds a voice against Jerusalem!
A voice against the Temple of the Lord!
A voice against the Bridegrooms and the Brides!
A voice against all people of the land!

Woe! woe—— [*Bursts away, followed by Second Jew.*

FIRST JEW.

Didst speak?

THIRD JEW.

No.

FOURTH JEW.

Look'd he on *us* as he spake?

FIRST JEW *(to the Second returning.)*

Thou follow'dst him! what now?

SECOND JEW.

'Twas a True Prophet!

THE JEWS.

Wherefore? Where went he?

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SA

SECOND JEW.

To the outer wall;
And there he suddenly cried out and sternly,
"A voice against the son of Hananiah!
"Woe, woe!" and at the instant, whether struck
By a chance stone from the enemy's engines, down
He sank and died!——

THIRD JEW.

There's some one comes this way—
Art sure he died indeed?

LEVITE.

It is the High-Priest.
The ephod gleams through the pale lowering night;
The breastplate gems, and the pure mitre-gold,
Shine lamplike, and the bells that fringe his robe
Chime faintly.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Israel, hear! I do beseech you,
Brethren, give ear!—

SECOND JEW.

Who's he that will not hear
The words of God's High-Priest?

HIGH-PRIEST.

It was but now
I sate within the Temple, in the court
That's consecrate to mine office—Your eyes wander—

JEWS.

Go on!—

HIGH-PRIEST.

Why hearken, then—Upon a sudden
The pavement seem'd to swell beneath my feet,
And the Veil shiver'd, and the pillars rock'd.
And there, within the very Holy of Holies,
There, from behind the winged Cherubim,
Where the Ark stood, noise, hurried and tumultuous,
Was heard, as when a king with all his host
Doth quit his palace. And anon, a voice,
Or voices, half in grief, half anger, yet
Nor human grief nor anger, even it seem'd

As though the hoarse and rolling thunder spake
With the articulate voice of man, it said,
"LET US DEPART!"

JEWS.

Most terrible! What follow'd?
Speak on! speak on!

HIGH-PRIEST.

I know not why, I felt
As though an outcast from the abandon'd Temple,
And fled.

JEWS.

Oh God! and Father of our Fathers,
Dost thou desert us?

CHORUS OF YOUTHS AND MAIDENS.

Under a happy planet art thou led,
Oh, chosen Virgin! to thy bridal bed.
So put thou off thy soft and bashful sadness,
And wipe away the timid maiden tear,—
Lo! redolent with the Prophet's oil of gladness,
And mark'd by heaven, the Bridegroom Youth is here.

FIRST JEW.

Hark—hark! an armed tread!

SECOND JEW.

The bold Ben Cathla.

BEN CATHLA.

Ay, ye are met, all met, as in a mart,
T' exchange against each other your dark tales
Of this night's fearful prodigies. I know it,
By the inquisitive and half-suspicious looks
With which ye eye each other, ye do wish
To disbelieve all ye have heard, and yet
Ye dare not. If ye have seen the moon unsphered,
And the stars fall; if the pale sheeted ghosts
Have met you wandering, and have pointed at you
With ominous designation; yet I scoff
Your poor and trivial terrors—Know ye Michol?

JEWS.

Michol!

BEN CATHLA.

The noble lady, she whose fathers
Dwelt beyond Jordan——

SECOND JEW.

Yes, we know her,
The tender and the delicate of women,(19)
That would not set her foot upon the ground
For delicacy and very tenderness.

BEN CATHLA.

The same!—We had gone forth in quest of food:
And we had enter'd many a house, where men
Were preying upon meagre herbs and skins;
And some were sating upon loathsome things
Unutterable, the ravening hunger. Some,
Whom we had plunder'd oft, laugh'd in their agony
To see us baffled. At her door she met us,
And "We have feasted together heretofore,"
She said, "most welcome warriors!" and she led us,
And bade us sit like dear and honour'd guests,
While she made ready. Some among us wonder'd,
And some spake jeeringly, and thank'd the lady
That she had thus with provident care reserved
The choicest banquet for our scarcest days.

But ever as she busily minister'd,
Quick, sudden sobs of laughter broke from her.
At length the vessel's covering she raised up,
And there it lay——

HIGH-PRIEST.

What lay?—Thou'rt sick and pale.

BEN CATHLA.

By earth and heaven, the remnant of a child!
A human child!——Ay, start! so started we—
Whereat she shriek'd aloud, and clapp'd her hands,
" Oh! dainty and fastidious appetites!
" The mother feasts upon her babe, and strangers
" Loathe the repast"—and then—" My beautiful child!
" The treasure of my womb! my bosom's joy!"
And then in her cool madness did she spurn us
Out of her doors. Oh still—oh still I hear her,
And I shall hear her till my day of death.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Oh, God of Mercies! this was once thy city!

CHORUS.

Joy to thee, beautiful and bashful Bride!
Joy! for the thrills of pride and joy become thee;
Thy curse of barrenness is taken from thee.
And thou shalt see the rosy infant sleeping
Upon the snowy fountain of thy breast;
And thou shalt feel how mothers' hearts are blest
By hours of bliss for moment's pain and weeping.
Joy to thee!

The above, SIMON, JOHN.

SIMON.

Away! what do ye in our midnight streets?
Go sleep! go sleep! or we shall have to lash you,
When the horn summons to the morning's war,
From out your drowsy beds——Away! I say.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Simon, thou know'st not the dark signs abroad.

JOHN.

Ay! is't not fearful and most ominous
That the sun shines not at deep midnight? Mark me,
Ye men with gasping lips and shivering limbs,
Thou mitred priest, and ye misnamed warriors,
If ye infect with your pale aguish fears
Our valiant city, we'll nor leave you limbs
To shake, nor voices to complain—T' your homes.

SIMON, JOHN.

JOHN.

In truth, good Simon, I am half your proselyte;
Your angels, that do bear such excellent wine,
Might shake a faith more firm than ours.

SIMON.

Brave John,
My soul is jocund. Expectation soars
Before mine eyes, like to a new-fledged eagle,
And stoopeth from her heavens with palms ne'er worn

By brows of Israel. Glory mounts with her,
Her deep seraphic trumpet swelling loud
O'er Zion's gladdening towers.

JOHN.

Why, then, to sleep.
This fight by day, and revel all the night,
Needs some repose—I'll to my bed—Farewell!

SIMON.

Brave John, farewell! and I'll to rest, and dream
Upon the coming honours of to-morrow.

MIRIAM.

To-morrow! will that morrow dawn upon thee?
I've warn'd them, I have lifted up my voice
As loud as 'twere an angel's, and well nigh
Had I betray'd my secret: they but scoff'd,
And ask'd how long I had been a prophetess?
But that injurious John did foully taunt me,

As though I envied my lost sister's bridal.
And when I clung to my dear father's neck,
With the close fondness of a last embrace,
He shook me from him.
But, ah me! how strange!
This moment, and the hurrying streets were full
As at a festival, now all's so silent
That I might hear the footsteps of a child.
The sound of dissolute mirth hath ceased, the lamps
Are spent, the voice of music broken off.
No watchman's tread comes from the silent wall,
There are nor lights nor voices in the towers.
The hungry have given up their idle search
For food, the gazers on the heavens are gone,
Even fear's at rest—all still as in a sepulchre!
And thou liest sleeping, oh Jerusalem!
A deeper slumber could not fall upon thee,
If thou wert desolate of all thy children,
And thy razed streets a dwelling-place for owls.
I do mistake! this is the Wilderness,

The Desert, where winds pass and make no sound,
And not the populous city, the besieged
And overhung with tempest. Why, my voice,
My motion, breaks upon the oppressive stillness
Like a forbidden and disturbing sound.
The very air 's asleep, my feeblest breathing
Is audible—I'll think my prayers—and then——
——Ha! 'tis the thunder of the Living God!
It peals! it crashes! it comes down in fire!
Again! it is the engine of the foe,
Our walls are dust before it——Wake—oh wake—
Oh Israel!—Oh Jerusalem, awake!
Why shouldst thou wake? thy foe is in the heavens.
Yea, thy judicial slumber weighs thee down,
And gives thee, oh! lost city, to the Gentile
Defenceless, unresisting.
It rolls down,
As though the Everlasting raged not now
Against our guilty Zion, but did mingle
The universal world in our destruction;

And all mankind were destined for a sacrifice
On Israel's funeral pile. Oh Crucified!
Here, here, where thou didst suffer, I beseech thee
Even by thy Cross!
Hark! now in impious rivalry
Man thunders. In the centre of our streets
The Gentile trumpet, the triumphant shouts
Of onset; and I,—I, a trembling girl,
Alone, awake, abroad.
Oh, now ye wake,
Now ye pour forth, and hideous Massacre,
Loathing his bloodless conquest, joys to see you
Thus naked and unarm'd—But where's my father?
Upon his couch in dreams of future glory.
Oh! where's my sister? in her bridal bed.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

Many Jews.

FIRST JEW.

To the Temple! To the Temple! Israel! Israel!
Your walls are on the earth, your houses burn
Like fires amid the autumnal olive grounds.
The Gentile's in the courts of the Lord's house.
To the Temple! save or perish with the Temple!

SECOND JEW.

To the Temple! haste, oh all ye circumcised!
Stay not for wife or child, for gold or treasure!
Pause not for light! the heavens are all on fire,
The Universal City burns!

THIRD JEW.

Arms! Arms!
Our women fall like doves into the nets
Of the fowler, and they dash upon the stones
Our innocent babes. Arms! Arms! before we die

Let 's reap a bloody harvest of revenge.
To the Temple!

FOURTH JEW.

Simon! lo, the valiant Simon.

The above, SIMON.

SIMON.

He comes! he comes! the black night blackens with him.
And the winds groan beneath his chariot wheels—
He comes from heaven, the Avenger of Jerusalem!
Ay, strike, proud Roman! fall, thou useless wall!
And vail your heads, ye towers, that have discharged
Your brief, your fruitless duty of resistance.
I've heard thee long, fierce Gentile! th' earthquake shocks
Of thy huge engines smote upon my soul,
And my soul scorn'd them. Oh! and hear'st not thou
One mightier than thyself, that shakes the heavens?
Oh pardon, that I thought that He, whose coming

Is promised and reveal'd, would calmly wait
The tardy throes of human birth. Messiah,
I know thee now, I know yon lightning fire
Thy robe of glory, and thy steps in heaven
Incessant thundering.

I had brought mine arms,
Mine earthly arms, my breastplate and my sword,
To cover and defend me—Oh! but thou
Art jealous, nor endur'st that human arm
Intrude on thy deliverance. I forswear them,
I cast them from me. Helmless, with nor shield
Nor sword, I stand, and in my nakedness
Wait thee, victorious Roman——

JEWS.

To the Temple!

SIMON.

Ay, well thou say'st, "to the Temple"—there 'twill be
Most visible. In his own house the Lord
Will shine most glorious. Shall we not behold

The Fathers bursting from their yielding graves,
Patriarchs and Priests, and Kings and Prophets, met
A host of spectral watchmen, on the towers
Of Zion to behold the full accomplishing
Of every Type and deep Prophetic word?
  Ay, to the Temple! thither will I too,
There bask in all the fulness of the day
That breaks at length o'er the long night of Judah.

Chorus of Jews flying towards the Temple.

Fly! fly! fly!
Clouds, not of incense, from the Temple rise,
And there are altar-fires, but not of sacrifice.
  And there are victims, yet nor bulls nor goats;
And Priests are there, but not of Aaron's kin;
And he that doth the murtherous rite begin,
  To stranger Gods his hecatomb devotes;

His hecatomb of Israel's chosen race
All foully slaughter'd in their Holy Place.

Break into joy, ye barren, that ne'er bore! (20)
Rejoice, ye breasts, where ne'er sweet infant hung!
From you, from you no smiling babes are wrung,
Ye die, but not amid your children's gore.
But howl and weep, oh ye that are with child,
Ye on whose bosoms unwean'd babes are laid;
The sword that's with the mother's blood defiled
Still with the infant gluts the insatiate blade.

Fly! fly! fly!
Fly not, I say, for Death is every where,
To keen-eyed Lust all places are the same:
There's not a secret chamber in whose lair
Our wives can shroud them from th' abhorred shame.
Where the sword fails, the fire will find us there,
All, all is death—the Gentile or the flame.

On to the Temple! Brethren, Israel on!
  Though every slippery street with carnage swims,
  Ho! spite of famish'd hearts and wounded limbs,
Still, still, while yet there stands one holy stone,
  Fight for your God, his sacred house to save,
  Or have its blazing ruins for your grave!

The Streets of Jerusalem.

MIRIAM.

Thou hard firm earth, thou wilt not break before me,
And hide me in thy dark and secret bosom!
Ye burning towers, ye fall upon your children
With a compassionate ruin—not on me—
Ye spare me only, I alone am mark'd
And seal'd for life: death cruelly seems to shun me,
Me, who am readiest and most wish to die.
Oh! I have sat me by the ghastly slain
In envy of their state, and wept a prayer
That I were cold like them, and safe from th' hands
Of the remorseless conqueror. I have fled,
And fled, and fled, and still I fly the nearer
To the howling ravagers—they are every where.
I've closed mine eyes, and rush'd I know not whither,
And still are swords and men and furious faces
Before me, and behind me, and around me.

But ah! the shrieks that come from out the dwellings
Of my youth's loved companions—every where
I hear some dear and most familiar voice
In its despairing frantic agonies.
Ah me! that I were struck with leprosy,
That sinful men might loathe me, and pass on.
And I might now have been by that sweet fountain
Where the winds whisper through the moonlight leaves,
I might have been with Javan there—Off, off—
These are not thoughts for one about to die—
Oh, Lord and Saviour Christ!

An Old Man, Miriam.

OLD MAN.

Who spake of Christ?
What hath that name to do with saving here?
He 's here, he 's here, the Lord of desolation,
Begirt with vengeance! in the fire above,
And fire below! in all the blazing city
Behold him manifest!

MIRIAM.

Oh! aged man
And miserable, on the verge of the grave
Thus lingering to behold thy country's ruin,
What know'st thou of the Christ?

OLD MAN.

I, I beheld him,
The Man of Nazareth whom thou mean'st—I saw him
When he went labouring up the accursed hill.
Heavily on his scourged and bleeding shoulders
Press'd the rough cross, and from his crowned brow
(Crown'd with no kingly diadem) the pale blood
Was shaken off, as with a patient pity
He look'd on us, the infuriate multitude.

MIRIAM.

Didst thou not fall and worship?

OLD MAN.

I had call'd
The curse upon my head, my voice had cried
Unto the Roman, "On us be his blood,

"And on our children!"—and on us it hath been—
My children and my children's children, all,
The Gentile sword hath reap'd them one by one,
And I, the last dry wither'd shock, await
The gleaning of the slaughterer.

MIRIAM.

Couldst thou see
The Cross, the Agony, and still hard of heart?

OLD MAN.

Fond child, I tell thee, ere the Cross was raised
He look'd around him, even in that last anguish,
With such a majesty of calm compassion,
Such solemn adjuration to our souls—
But yet 'twas not reproachful, only sad—
As though our guilt had been the bitterest pang
Of suffering. And there dwelt about him still,
About his drooping head and fainting limb,
A sense of power; as though he chose to die,
Yet might have shaken off the load of death

Without an effort. Awful breathlessness
Spread round, too deep and too intense for tears.

MIRIAM.

Thou didst believe?——

OLD MAN.

Away! Men glar'd upon me
As though they did detect my guilty pity;
Their voices roar'd around me like a tempest,
And every voice was howling, "Crucify him!"—
I dared not be alone the apostate child
Of Abraham——

MIRIAM.

Ah! thou didst not join the cry?

OLD MAN.

Woman, I did, and with a voice so audible
Men turn'd to praise my zeal. And when the darkness,
The noonday darkness, fell upon the earth,
And the earth's self shook underneath my feet,
I stood before the Cross, and in my pride

Rejoiced that I had shaken from my soul
The soft compunction.

MIRIAM.

Ha!—but now, oh! now,
Thou own'st him for the eternal Son of God,
The mock'd, and scourg'd, and crown'd, and crucified.
Thou dost believe the blazing evidence
Of yon fierce flames! thou bow'st thyself before
The solemn preacher, Desolation,
That now on Zion's guilty ruins seated
Bears horrible witness.

OLD MAN.

Maiden, I believe them,
I dare not disbelieve; it is my curse,
My agony, that cleaves to me in death.

MIRIAM.

Oh! not a curse, it is a gracious blessing—
Believe, and thou shalt live!

OLD MAN.

Back, insolent!

What! would'st thou school these gray hairs, and become
Mine age's teacher?

MIRIAM.

Hath not God ordain'd
Wisdom from babes and sucklings?

OLD MAN.

Back, I say;
I have lived a faithful child of Abraham,
And so will die.

MIRIAM.

For ever!——He is gone,
Yet he looks round, and shakes his hoary head
In dreadful execration 'gainst himself
And me——I dare not follow him.

What's here?
It is mine home, the dwelling of my youth,
O'er which the flames climb up with such fierce haste.
Lo, lo! they burst from that house-top, where oft
My sister and myself have sate and sang
Our pleasant airs of gladness! Ah, Salone!

Where art thou now? These, these are not the lights
That should be shining on a marriage-bed.
Oh! that I had been call'd to dress thy bier,
To pour sweet ointments on thy shrouded corpse,
Rather than thus to weave thee bridal chaplets
To be so madly worn, so early wither'd!
Where art thou? I dare only wish thee dead,
Even as I wish myself.
'Tis she, herself!
Thank God, she hath not perish'd in the flames!
'Tis she—she's here—she's here—the unfaded crown
Hanging from her loose tresses, and her raiment
Only the bridal veil wrapt round her——Sister!
Oh! by my mother's blessings on us both,
Stay, stay and speak to me—Salone!

SALONE.

Thee!
'Tis all thy bitter envy, that hath made
The exquisite music cease, and hath put out
The gentle lamps, and with a jealous voice
Hath call'd him from me.

MIRIAM.

Seest thou not, Salone,
The city 's all on fire, the foe 's around us?

SALONE.

The fire! the foe! what's fire or foe to me?
What's ought but Amariah? He is mine,
The eagle-eyed, the noble and the brave,
The Man of Men, the glory of our Zion,
And ye have rent him from me.

MIRIAM.

Dearest, who?

SALONE.

I tell thee, he was mine, oh! mine so fondly,
And I was his—I had begun to dare
The telling how I loved him—and the night
It was so rapturously still around us—
When, even as though he heard a voice, and yet
There was no sound I heard, he sprung from me
Unto the chamber-door, and he look'd out
Into the city——

MIRIAM.

Well!—Nay, let not fall
Thy insufficient raiment——Merciful Heaven,
Thy bosom bleeds! What rash and barbarous hand
Hath———

SALONE.

He came back and kiss'd me, and he said—
I know not what he said—but there was something
Of Gentile ravisher, and his beauteous bride,—
Me, me he meant, he call'd me beauteous bride,—
And he stood o'er me with a sword so bright
My dazzled eyes did close. And presently,
Methought, he smote me with the sword, but then
He fell upon my neck, and wept upon me,
And I felt nothing but his burning tears.

MIRIAM.

She faints! Look up, sweet sister! I have stanch'd
The blood awhile—but her dim wandering eyes
Are fixing—she awakes—she speaks again.

SALONE.

Ah! brides, they say, should be retired, and dwell
Within in modest secrecy; yet here
Am I, a this night's bride, in the open street,
My naked feet on the cold stones, the wind
Blowing my raiment off—it's very cold—
Oh, Amariah! let me lay my head
Upon thy bosom, and so fall asleep.

MIRIAM.

There is no Amariah here—'tis I,
Thy Miriam.

SALONE.

The Christian Miriam!

MIRIAM.

Oh! that thou too wert Christian! I could give thee
A cold and scanty baptism of my tears.
Oh! shrink not from me, lift not up thy head,
Thy dying head, from thy loved sister's lap.

SALONE.

Off! set me free! the song is almost done,

The bridegroom's at the door, and I must meet him,
Though my knees shake and tremble. If he come,
And find me sad and cold, as I am now,
He will not love me as he did.

MIRIAM.

Too true,
Thou growest cold indeed.

SALONE.

Night closes round,
Slumber is on my soul. If Amariah
Return with morning, glorious and adorn'd
In spoil, as he is wont, thou'lt wake me, sister?
——Ah! no, no, no! this is no waking sleep,
It bursts upon me—Yes, and Simon's daughter,
The bride of Amariah, may not fear,
Nor shrink from dying. My half-failing spirit
Comes back, my soft love-melted heart is strong:
I know it all, in mercy and in love
Thou 'st wounded me to death—and I will bless thee,
True lover! noble husband! my last breath
Is thine in blessing—Amariah!—Love!

And yet thou shouldst have staid to close mine eyes,
Oh Amariah!——and an hour ago
I was a happy bride upon thy bosom,
And now am——Oh God, God! if he have err'd,
And should come back again, and find me——dead!

MIRIAM.

Oh, God of Mercies! she is gone an infidel,
An infidel unrepentant, to thy presence,
The partner of my cradle and my bed,
My own, my only sister!—oh! but thou,
Lord, knowest that thou hast not drawn her to thee,
By making the fond passions of the heart,
Like mine, thy ministers of soft persuasion.
She hath not loved a Christian, hath not heard
From lips, whose very lightest breath is dear,
Thy words of comfort.

I will cover her.

Thy bridal veil is now thy shroud, my sister,
And long thou wilt not be without a grave.
Jerusalem will bury all her children
Ere many hours are past.

There's some one comes——
A Gentile soldier——'tis the same who oft
Hath cross'd me, and I've fled and 'scap'd him. Now,
How can I fly, and whither? Will the dead
Protect me? Ha! whichever way I turn,
Are others fiercer and more terrible.
I'll speak to him,—there's something in his mien
Less hideous than the rest.

Miriam, the Soldier.

MIRIAM.

Oh! noble warrior,
I see not that thy sword is wet with blood:
And thou didst turn aside lest thou shouldst tread
Upon a dying man; and e'en but now,
When a bold ruffian almost seiz'd on me,
Thou didst stand forth and scare him from his prey.
Hast thou no voice? perhaps thou art deaf too,
And I am pleading unto closed ears—

——Keep from me! stand aloof! I am infected.
Oh! if the devil, that haunts the souls of men,
They say, with lawless and forbidden thoughts,
If he possess thee, here I lift my voice—
By Jesus Christ of Nazareth, I adjure
The evil spirit to depart from thee.
Alas! I feel thy grasp upon mine arm,
And I must follow thee. Oh! thou hast surely
In thine own land, in thine own native home,
A wife, a child, a sister: think what 'twere
To have a stranger's violent arms around her.
Ha! every where are more—and this man's hand
Did surely tremble; at the holy name
He seem'd to bow his head. I'll follow thee,
Let me but kiss the body of my sister,
My dead lost sister——
Bless thee! and thou'lt spare me—
At least thou art less savage than the rest.
And He that had a virgin mother, He
Will surely listen to a virgin's prayer.

There's hope and strength within my soul; lead on,
I'll follow thee——Salone, oh that thou
Hadst room in thy cold marriage bed for me!

The Front of the Temple.

SIMON.

They fight around the altar, and the dead
Heap the chok'd pavement. Israel tramples Israel,
And Gentile Gentile, rushing where the Temple,
Like to a pit of frantic gladiators,
Is howling with the strife of men, that fight not
For conquest, but the desperate joy of slaying.
Priests, Levites, women, pass and hurry on,
At least to die within the sanctuary.
I only wait without—I take my stand
Here in the vestibule—and though the thunders
High and aloof o'er the wide arch of heaven

Hold their calm march, nor deviate to their vengeance
On earth, in holy patience, Lord, I wait,
Defying thy long lingering to subdue
The faith of Simon.

'Twas but now I pass'd
The corpse of Amariah, that display'd
In the wild firelight all its wounds, and lay
Embalm'd in honour. John of Galilee
Is prisoner; I beheld him fiercely gnashing
His ponderous chains. Of me they take no heed,
For I disdain to tempt them to my death,
And am not arm'd to slay.

The light within
Grows redder, broader. 'Tis a fire that burns
To save or to destroy. On Sinai's top,
Oh Lord! thou didst appear in flames, the mountain
Burnt round about thee. Art thou here at length,
And must I close mine eyes, lest they be blinded
By the full conflagration of thy presence?

TITUS, PLACIDUS, TERENTIUS, Soldiers, SIMON.

TITUS.

Save, save the Temple! Placidus, Terentius,
Haste, bid the legions cease to slay; and quench
Yon ruining fire.
                    Who's this, that stands unmoved
Mid slaughter, flame, and wreck, nor deigns to bow
Before the Conqueror of Jerusalem?
What art thou?

SIMON.

                    Titus, dost thou think that Rome
Shall quench the fire that burns within yon Temple?
Ay, when your countless and victorious cohorts,
Ay, when your Cæsar's throne, your Capitol
Have fallen before it.

TITUS.

                    Madman, speak! what art thou?

SIMON.

The uncircumcis'd have known me heretofore,
And thou mayst know hereafter.

PLACIDUS.

It is he—
The bloody Captain of the Rebels, Simon,
The Chief Assassin. Seize him, round his limbs
Bind straight your heaviest chains. An unhop'd pageant
For Cæsar's high ovation. We'll not slay him,
Till we have made a show to the wives of Rome
Of the great Hebrew Chieftain.

SIMON.

Knit them close,
See that ye rivet well their galling links.

(Holding up the chains.)

And ye 've no finer flax to gyve me with?

TERENTIUS.

Burst these, and we will forge thee stronger then.

SIMON.

Fool, 'tis not yet the hour.

TITUS.

Hark! hark! the shrieks
Of those that perish in the flames. Too late
I came to spare, it wraps the fabric round.
Fate, Fate, I feel thou'rt mightier than Cæsar,
He cannot save what thou hast doom'd! Back, Romans,
Withdraw your angry cohorts, and give place
To the inevitable ruin. Destiny,
It is thine own, and Cæsar yields it to thee.
Lead off the prisoner.

SIMON.

Can it be? the fire
Destroys, the thunders cease. I'll not believe,
And yet how dare I doubt?
A moment, Romans.
Is't then thy will, Almighty Lord of Israel,
That this thy Temple be a heap of ashes?
Is't then thy will, that I, thy chosen Captain,
Put on the raiment of captivity?
By Abraham, our father! by the Twelve,

The Patriarch Sons of Jacob! by the Law,
In thunder spoken! by the untouch'd Ark!
By David, and the Anointed Race of Kings!
By great Elias, and the gifted Prophets!
I here demand a sign!

'Tis there—I see it.
The fire that rends the Veil!

We are then of thee
Abandon'd——not abandon'd of ourselves.
Heap woes upon us, scatter us abroad,
Earth's scorn and hissing; to the race of men
A loathsome proverb; spurn'd by every foot,
And curs'd by every tongue; our heritage
And birthright bondage; and our very brows
Bearing, like Cain's, the outcast mark of hate:
Israel will still be Israel, still will boast
Her fallen Temple, her departed glory;
And, wrapt in conscious righteousness, defy
Earth's utmost hate, and answer scorn with scorn.

The Fountain of Siloe.

Miriam, the Soldier.

MIRIAM.

Here, here—not here—oh! any where but here—
Not toward the fountain, not by this lone path.
If thou wilt bear me hence, I'll kiss thy feet,
I'll call down blessings, a lost virgin's blessings
Upon thy head. Thou hast hurried me along,
Through darkling street, and over smoking ruin,
And yet there seem'd a soft solicitude,
And an officious kindness in thy violence—
But I've not heard thy voice.

Oh, strangely cruel!

And wilt thou make me sit even on this stone,
Where I have sate so oft, when the calm moonlight
Lay in its slumber on the slumbering fountain?

Ah! where art thou, thou that wert ever with me,
Oh Javan! Javan!

THE SOLDIER.

When was Javan call'd
By Miriam, that Javan answer'd not?
Forgive me all thy tears, thy agonies.
I dar'd not speak to thee, lest the strong joy
Should overpower thee, and thy feeble limbs
Refuse to bear thee in thy flight.

MIRIAM.

What's here?
Am I in heaven, and thou forehasted thither
To welcome me? Ah, no! thy warlike garb,
And the wild light, that reddens all the air,
Those shrieks——and yet this could not be on earth,
The sad, the desolate, the sinful earth.
And thou couldst venture amid fire and death,
Amid thy country's ruins to protect me,
Dear Javan?

JAVAN.

'Tis not now the first time, Miriam,
That I have held my life a worthless sacrifice
For thine. Oh! all these later days of siege
I've slept in peril, and I've woke in peril.
For every meeting I've defied the cross,
On which the Roman, in his merciless scorn,
Bound all the sons of Salem. Sweet, I boast not;
But to thank rightly our Deliverer,
We must know all the extent of his deliverance.

MIRIAM.

And I can only weep!

JAVAN.

Ay, thou shouldst weep,
Lost Zion's daughter.

MIRIAM.

Ah! I thought not then
Of my dead sister, and my captive father—
Said they not "captive" as we pass'd?—I thought not
Of Zion's ruin and the Temple's waste.

Javan, I fear that mine are tears of joy;
'Tis sinful at such times—but thou art here,
And I am on thy bosom, and I cannot
Be, as I ought, entirely miserable.

JAVAN.

My own beloved! I dare call thee mine,
For Heaven hath given thee to me—chosen out,
As we two are, for solitary blessing,
While the universal curse is pour'd around us
On every head, 'twere cold and barren gratitude
To stifle in our hearts the holy gladness.
But, oh Jerusalem! thy rescued children
May not, retir'd within their secret joy,
Shut out the mournful sight of thy calamities.
Oh, beauty of earth's cities! throned queen
Of thy milk-flowing valleys! crown'd with glory!
The envy of the nations! now no more
A city——One by one thy palaces
Sink into ashes, and the uniform smoke
O'er half thy circuit hath brought back the night

Which the insulting flames had made give place
To their untimely terrible day. The flames
That in the Temple, their last proudest conquest,
Now gather all their might, and furiously,
Like revellers, hold there exulting triumph.
Round every pillar, over all the roof,
On the wide gorgeous front, the holy depth
Of the far sanctuary, every portico,
And every court, at once, concentrated,
As though to glorify and not destroy,
They burn, they blaze——
Look, Miriam, how it stands!
Look!

MIRIAM.

There are men around us!

JAVAN.

They are friends,
Bound here to meet me, and behold the last
Of our devoted city. Look, oh Christians!
Still the Lord's house survives man's fallen dwellings,

And wears its ruin with a majesty
Peculiar and divine. Still, still it stands,
All one wide fire, and yet no stone hath fallen.
Hark—hark!
The feeble cry of an expiring nation.
Hark—hark!
The awe-struck shout of the unboasting conqueror
Hark—hark!
It breaks—it severs—it is on the earth.
The smother'd fires are quench'd in their own ruins:
Like a huge dome, the vast and cloudy smoke
Hath cover'd all.
And it is now no more,
Nor ever shall be to the end of time,
The Temple of Jerusalem!——Fall down,
My brethren, on the dust, and worship here
The mysteries of God's wrath.
Even so shall perish,
In its own ashes, a more glorious Temple,
Yea, God's own architecture, this vast world,

This fated universe—the same destroyer,
The same destruction——Earth, Earth, Earth, behold!
And in that judgment look upon thine own!

HYMN.

Even thus amid thy pride and luxury,
Oh Earth! shall that last coming burst on thee,
That secret coming of the Son of Man.
When all the cherub-throning clouds shall shine,
Irradiate with his bright advancing sign:
When that Great Husbandman shall wave his fan,
Sweeping, like chaff, thy wealth and pomp away:
Still to the noontide of that nightless day,
Shalt thou thy wonted dissolute course maintain.
Along the busy mart and crowded street,
The buyer and the seller still shall meet,
And marriage feasts begin their jocund strain:
Still to the pouring out the Cup of Woe;
Till Earth, a drunkard, reeling to and fro,
And mountains molten by his burning feet,
And Heaven his presence own, all red with furnace heat.

The hundred-gated Cities then,
The Towers and Temples, nam'd of men
Eternal, and the Thrones of Kings;
The gilded summer Palaces,
The courtly bowers of love and ease,
Where still the Bird of pleasure sings;
Ask ye the destiny of them?
Go gaze on fallen Jerusalem!
Yea, mightier names are in the fatal roll,
'Gainst earth and heaven God's standard is unfurl'd,
The skies are shrivell'd like a burning scroll,
And the vast common doom ensepulchres the world.

Oh! who shall then survive?
Oh! who shall stand and live?
When all that hath been, is no more:
When for the round earth hung in air,
With all its constellations fair
In the sky's azure canopy;
When for the breathing Earth, and sparkling Sea,
Is but a fiery deluge without shore,

Heaving along the abyss profound and dark,
A fiery deluge, and without an Ark.

Lord of all power, when thou art there alone
On thy eternal fiery-wheeled throne,
That in its high meridian noon
Needs not the perish'd sun nor moon:
When thou art there in thy presiding state,
Wide-sceptred Monarch o'er the realm of doom:
When from the sea depths, from earth's darkest womb,
The dead of all the ages round thee wait:
And when the tribes of wickedness are strewn
Like forest leaves in the autumn of thine ire:
Faithful and True! thou still wilt save thine own!
The Saints shall dwell within th' unharming fire,
Each white robe spotless, blooming every palm.
Even safe as we, by this still fountain's side,
So shall the Church, thy bright and mystic Bride,
Sit on the stormy gulf a halcyon bird of calm.

Yes, 'mid yon angry and destroying signs,
O'er us the rainbow of thy mercy shines,
We hail, we bless the covenant of its beam,
Almighty to avenge, Almightiest to redeem!

NOTES.

Note 1, page 5, line 1.

Advance the eagles, Caius Placidus.

Placidus, though not expressly mentioned as one of the Roman generals engaged, had a command previously in Syria.

Note 2, page 8, line 10.

A mount of snow fretted with golden pinnacles!

Τοῖς γε μὴν εἰσαφικνουμένοις ξένοις, πόῤῥωθεν ὅμοιος ὄρει χιόνος πλήρει κατεφαίνετο καὶ γαρ καθὰ μὴ κεχρυσωτο λευκότατος ἦν. (*Joseph.* lib. v. c. 5.) See the whole description.

Note 3, page 10, line 1.

Thy brethren of the Porch, imperial Titus.

Mr. Reginald Heber's "Stoic tyrant's philosophic pride" will occur to the memory at least of academic readers.

Note 4, page 12, lines 3, 4.

Let this night

Our wide encircling walls complete their circuit.

"The days shall come upon thee when thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side." Luke xix. 43.

For the remarkable and perfect completion of this prophecy,

see the description of the wall built by Titus.—*Josephus*, lib. v. ch. 12.

Note 5, page 12, lines 12, 13.

I should give to the flame
Whate'er opposed the sovereign sway of Cæsar.

Terentius, or Turnus Rufus, is marked with singular detestation in the Jewish traditions.

Note 6, page 13, line 1.

Sweet fountain, once again I visit thee!

The fountain of Siloe was just without the walls. The upper city, occupied by Simon (*Joseph.* v. 6.), ended nearly on a line with the fountain. Though, indeed, Simon had possession of parts also of the lower city.—*Joseph.* v. 1.

Note 7, page 16, line 18.

Let Gischala, let fallen Jotapata.

Gischala and Jotapata, towns before taken by the Romans.

Note 8, page 27, line 3.

Our bridal songs, &c.

It must be recollected, that the unmarried state was looked on with peculiar horror by the Jewish maidens. By marriage there was a hope of becoming the mother of the Messiah.

Note 9, page 43, line 5.

Did old Mathias hold.

Simon put to death Mathias the High Priest and his sons, by whom he had been admitted into the city.

Note 10, page 47, line 7.

Ye want not testimonies to your mildness.

Titus crucified round the city those who fled from the famine and the cruelty of the leaders within. (*Joseph.* v. ch. 13.) Sometimes, according to *Josephus*, (lib. v. c. 11.) 500 in a day suffered.

Note 11, page 50, line 5.

Even on the hills where gleam your myriad spears.

The camp of Titus comprehended a space called the "Assyrian's Camp."

Note 12, page 54, line 18.

A javelin to his pale and coward heart!

Josephus gives more than one speech which he addressed to his countrymen. They only mocked and once wounded him.

Note 13, page 62, line 3.

Behold, oh Lord! the Heathen tread, &c.

See Psalm lxxx. 7, &c.

Note 14, page 74, lines 7, 8.

Even in the garb and with the speech of worship,
Went he not up into the very Temple?

This was the mode in which John surprised Eleazar, who before was in possession of the Temple.

Note 15, page 75, line 1.

There hath he held the palace of his lusts.

Γυναικιζόμενοι δὲ τὰς ὄψεις, ἐφόνων ταῖς δεξιαῖς, θρυπτόμενοι δὲ τοῖς βαδίσμασιν ἐξαπίνης ἐγίνοντο πολεμισταί. *Joseph.* lib. iv. c. 9. There is a long passage to the same effect.

Note 16, page 86, line 12.

And where is now the wine for the bridegroom's rosy cup.

In the prophecy of our Saviour concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and that of the world, it is said that "as in the days of Noe, they shall marry and be given in marriage." Matth. xxiv.

Note 17, page 94, line 10.

That when the signs are manifest.

The prodigies are related by Josephus in a magnificent page of historic description.

Note 18, page 107, line 18.

To the sound of timbrels sweet.

The bridal ceremonies are from Calmet, Harmer, and other illustrators of scripture. It is a singular tradition that the use of the crowns was discontinued after the fall of Jerusalem. A few peculiarities are adopted from an account of a Maronite wedding in Harmer.

Note 19, page 118, line 3.

The tender and the delicate of women.

"The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for

delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son and toward her daughter, and toward her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and toward her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly in the siege and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates." (Deuter. xxviii. 56 and 57.) See also Lamentations ii. 20. The account of the unnatural mother is detailed in Josephus.

Note 20, page 130, line 3.

Break into joy, ye barren that ne'er bore!

"And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days." (Matth. xxiv. 19.)

THE END.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.